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THE

NATURE AND METHOD

OF

REVELATION

BY

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TO MY PUPILS

PAST AND PRESENT

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INTRODUCTION.

THE first part of this volume is composed of a series of Articles which were written at the request of the editor of "The Century Magazine," and have lately been published in that periodical. They have now been carefully revised and somewhat enlarged. The additions do not cover a great deal of space, but they will contribute, as I hope, to the better elucidation of the subject. The concluding portion of the volume comprises a number of Essays on important topics in New Testament criticism which are briefly touched upon in the preceding chapters.

There is no apparent diminution of interest in the study of the Bible. Never to so great a degree as at present has it been the object of thorough scrutiny. The interest in biblical study, as distinguished from the mere reading of the Bible for a purely practical end, has spread widely, and is by no means confined to the class whose calling it is to interpret its con-

tents. Under these circumstances it is more than ever important that the Bible should be looked at from the right point of view. In the course of my own studies and reflections, the perception of the relation of the Scriptures to the historical process of Divine Revelation, the end and aim of which was the full introduction of the kingdom of God through him who, although he was "meek and lowly in heart," did not hesitate to style himself "the Light of the World," — the perception, I say, of this relation has become in my mind constantly more distinct and vivid. In this ground-work of historical reality, this gradual entering of God with a transforming energy into the course of human history, I find a solvent for numerous difficulties of Scripture and a help in its interpretation. These are the points which I have tried, with such measure of light as I possess, to illustrate in the following pages.

It is now several centuries since the Bible began to be examined critically, with an earnestness not before applied to the study, by methods more in accord with the canons of true science, and in connection with a marvellous progress of human knowledge in all branches of research. It would be strange indeed if large gains should not have been made through so great and long-continued exertions, in which so many scholars belonging to different

nations have been engaged. Opinions respecting the character of the Scriptures could not remain absolutely unchanged. The Scriptures remain, and must continue to be, the Christian's guide in matters of faith and duty, the normative exposition of Christian doctrine. When they are taken collectively, in their entire compass, the New Testament in connection with the Old, — and only then is their sufficiency affirmed in the Protestant creed, — there is seen to inhere in this body of writings a self-completing, and in that way and to that extent a self-rectifying, quality. Not all the specific opinions, however, that were held in former times under the general formula stated above, can be retained now by candid students of the Holy Scriptures. We are not living in the middle of the seventeenth century, but in the last decades of the nineteenth. All the ascertained results of this fruitful period of biblical investigation must be frankly recognized. In the end Christian Evidences will be seen to be the stronger by this allegiance to truth and loyalty to conscience. In these days no real service is done to the Christian cause by stubbornly adhering to dogmatic prepossessions which have been proved to be untenable, — still less by unseemly denunciation of Christian believers who have been led by conscientious inquiry to abandon them. It is wise for

those who are no longer young to remember an early resolution of Jonathan Edwards. "I observe," says Edwards in his Diary, "that old men seldom have any advantage of new discoveries, because they are beside the way of thinking to which they have been so long used. *Resolved*, if ever I live to [advanced] years, that I will be impartial to hear the reasons of all pretended discoveries, and receive them, if rational, how long soever I have been used to another way of thinking." In biblical science as in natural science, incidental to all this activity in investigation there are no doubt many unverified speculations. This does not imply that there are no sure gains, no healthful progress. The lesson to be drawn is that new opinions are to be sifted, and the wheat separated from the chaff. There is no better motto for the student than the words of the Apostle Paul: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

Five and twenty years have passed since, in my work entitled "Essays on the Supernatural Origin of Christianity," I reviewed elaborately the critical and historical theories of Baur and his school relative to the origin of Christianity and the New Testament writings, and the rise of the Catholic Church of the second century. It was then confidently proclaimed by many that by this school the last word

of science on these momentous questions had been spoken. Now in the new school of criticism in Germany the fundamental tenets of the Tübingen critics are pretty generally forsaken. Professor Huxley was apparently not aware of this fact when he referred lately to Baur, Volkmar, Zeller, and others with them, as authoritative expositors of critical science. It simply shows that even a man of so clear and penetrating intelligence as Professor Huxley cannot safely intermit his reading of German divinity. In the land where his authors dwelt, the wind changes too often. In this time of ferment, when the multiform tongues of the Press are everywhere heard, intellectual changes are rapid everywhere, but nowhere, probably, so rapid as among our Teutonic cousins over the Sea. The extent to which the basal propositions of the Tübingen school have already become obsolete, is indicated in the following words from an article by Professor Harnack: —

"The *possible* picture it sketched was not the *real*, and the key with which it attempted to solve all problems did not suffice for the most simple. . . . They [the Tübingen views] have indeed been compelled to undergo very large modifications. But as regards the development of the Church in the second century, it may safely be said that the hypotheses of the Tübingen school have proved themselves everywhere inadequate, very erroneous, and are to-day held by only a very few scholars."

There are individuals, to be sure, who show a disposition to fall back on some of the peculiar positions of the Tübingen school concerning the New Testament narratives. This appears to be the case with Holtzmann in his Introduction to the New Testament and in his recent Commentary. But generally speaking, while Baur's services in awakening thought, and the value of his contributions to learning, are highly appreciated, as they ought to be, the leading features of his system are no longer accepted. It seems to be our lot to hear in English the echoes of the conflicts in Germany of a generation ago. Mr. T. H. Green brings back Hegelism with him to Oxford, and gives himself up to the fascination of Baur's historical theories. An outcome of the Hegelian theology thus derived is "Robert Elsmere," a pleasing love-story, steeped in an infusion of Baur and Strauss, but treated by friend and foe as if it contained some new discovery threatening the foundations of the Christian religion. The new criticism in Germany, however, notwithstanding its comparative sobriety, brings forward, by way of substitute for the Tübingen theories, views respecting the evangelical history and the authorship of the New Testament writings — for example, the Fourth Gospel — which are open to serious objections. To some of these hypotheses attention is given in several of the closing Essays of this volume.

The assailant of Christianity in the eighteenth century was Deism; the assailant, open or latent, of Christianity in the nineteenth century is Pantheism. Deism conceived of God as apart from the world; it was taken up with the thought of his transcendence. Now the pendulum has swung to the opposite extreme. Pantheism is taken up with the immanence of God. Each lays hold of a half-truth. The two half-truths unite in Christian theism, which does not ignore the indwelling of God and his all-present energy, but at the same time recognizes his free, conscious personality. In him we live and move: he is a Father, and hears the prayers of his children. He is neither to be separated from the world nor confounded with it. The influence of the Pantheistic systems that followed Kant is not yet spent. One may liken them in their seductive splendor to the structure raised by the fallen angels, where —

> "From the arched roof,
> Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
> Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
> With naphtha and asphaltus, *yielded light*
> *As from a sky.*"

Outside of its philosophical statement in the German idealists after Kant, and in disciples of Spinoza, Pantheism gets a lodgment in certain empirical systems where we might not expect to find it. Spencer's

philosophy has been aptly characterized by Mansel as an attempt to engraft Pantheism upon Positivism. The "Unknowable" has no function different from that of a natural force. It is difficult to believe that the proposal to found religion on such a conception of God can be seriously meant.

In literature we are reminded of the prevalence of a Pantheistic drift of thought and feeling by the recollection of Matthew Arnold's resolution of God into "a stream of tendency" on the side of righteousness, or of lines of his like the following, from the poem on Heine's Grave: —

> "What are we all but a mood,
> A single mood, of the life
> Of the Being in whom we exist,
> Who alone is all things in one?"

A like mode of thought pervades the writings of Emerson, although in him Pantheism is not hardened into a consistent creed; for Emerson to the end clung to the belief in personal immortality, and he pronounced the acceptance of this belief the "test of a man's sanity." The Deism of the former day was vanquished. It has no standing in the courts of science. No better lot, it is safe to predict, awaits the Pantheism of the present day. It cannot endure the contact of searching philosophical tests. It is built on assumptions, — definitions converted into

realities, like Spinoza's idea of "substance," or fictitious notions of "the infinite" which have no reality outside of the philosopher's brain. The only religion that is possible under a Pantheistic system is a vague, unsubstantial, unpractical sentiment, prayerless, and with no outlook of hope for the soul beyond the boundary of this fleeting life. To try to collect "the data of ethics" when there is no recognition of man as a personal agent capable of freely originating the conduct and the states of will for which he is morally responsible, is labor lost. The reality and profound significance of *personality* in God and in man, is a truth which is alike essential in all sound philosophy and in all earnest views of human life and duty.

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THE NATURE AND METHOD OF REVELATION.

CHAPTER I.

REVELATION AND THE BIBLE.

In Chillingworth's famous work, "The Religion of Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation," occurs a sentence which passed into an adage: "The Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants." In the sense in which the phrase was used by that acute logician — a writer who had outgrown the narrowness of the school of his godfather Laud, in which he had received his early training — nothing can be more true. It is not from an infallible church that a Protestant derives his creed. With him the Scriptures are the rule of faith. They are the guide, at once authoritative and sufficient or exclusive, on all matters pertaining to religious belief and moral conduct. These are the customary formulas; and the saying of Chillingworth is a strong assertion of the Protestant position, which stands opposed, on the one hand, to that of the Church of Rome, and, on the other hand, to the

rationalism which substitutes, in matters of religion, a subjective standard, be it one's own reasonings or feelings, for the Bible. Statements like this aphorism of Chillingworth have the value and attraction which belong to any terse enunciation of an important principle. They serve as watchwords in defensive warfare when adversaries approaching from opposite quarters are to be repelled. But even Rome, while asserting the authority of tradition, and claiming for the Church the place of an infallible interpreter, does not deny that the Bible is the record of the whole revealed faith. There is small danger of extravagance in praising the Bible, as every one will admit who appreciates what it contains, surveys the influence of this book in the past, and knows its indispensable service in awakening and supporting the life of religion in the souls of men. It is the simple truth, and no mere conventional compliment to the Scriptures, to say that Christian piety cut off from contact with their light-giving and life-giving power would wither away like plants robbed of the sunlight.

But we need not examine the Bible long to become aware of problems and perplexities which the current axioms relative to the sufficiency and authority of Scripture do not clear up. On opening its covers the searcher for truth does not find between them a dogmatic and ethical treatise in which are methodically set down the articles which he is to believe and the things which he is to do. His Bible is not a Tridentine Creed, nor an Augsburg Confession, nor a West-

minster Catechism; nor does it wear the aspect of a systematic account of "the whole duty of man." To be sure, doctrines and precepts are strewn here and there along its pages. But they must be picked out; and when thus collected they do not always appear at first to agree with one another. The reader discovers that numerous commandments were issued at epochs far back in the past; that they were addressed to a specific people or to particular individuals, and have no very perceptible application to present circumstances or to himself. The Bible, from which he is expected to ascertain the purpose of life and how that purpose is to be fulfilled, turns out to be a voluminous collection of miscellaneous writings. They emanate from numerous authors, not all of whom are known even by name. These writings were all of them composed long ago and at different times — a portion of them at dates extremely remote. Here are histories, some of them traversing the same ground, and with striking differences in the point of view, to say the least, from which they were written; poems, among them a copious collection of devotional lyrics, and one metrical drama which may be styled, in the better sense of the term, erotic; likewise, a book filled with dirges, besides a considerable number of other compilations of discourses by ancient seers; another drama dealing with the mystery connected with the allotment of evil by Divine Providence; a collection of proverbs also; letters of apostles to churches; the whole ending with a book made up of visions. This multifarious

literature, so far as the older grand division of it is concerned, the ancient Jews distributed into three departments, — the law, the prophets, and the hagiographa, or "psalms;" the last of the sections being a group that was brought together after the others, and is more diversified in its contents. In the later, or New Testament, division, several narratives of the ministry of Jesus and one narrative of the labors of the Apostles are followed by the Epistles and the Apocalypse. In neither of the two main divisions of the Bible are the component parts united even by the external tie derived from the order in which they were written. In cases not a few, the date of the books is unsettled. Differences of opinion on this point prevail among the scholars who are versed in such inquiries. With reference to certain books, — for example, the first six historical books of the Old Testament, — this diversity of opinion is very wide. No doubt the disagreement on these questions of date is owing partly to the influence of a dogmatic bias in one direction or another, to subjective leanings which are void of scientific value, but rather stand in the way of an unprejudiced verdict. But when allowance is made for the refraction due to innate or acquired prepossession, there is still left no small residue of uncertainty on the topics adverted to. Each of the various authors whose productions have been brought together in the Bible is plainly marked by personal traits which are reflected in both his thought and his style. Obvious limitations belonging to time and place, and to varying types of

mind and culture, are stamped upon his pages. The peculiarity of the composite volume which we call "the Bible" — even this title, it is worth while to remark, was originally a plural — is strikingly felt when it is compared with the sacred books of other religions. The Vedas, the ancient Brahmanical scriptures, are mainly collections of hymns. The Koran is composed exclusively of communications alleged to have been made by an angel to one person, Mohammed, and all within an interval of a little more than twenty years. These oracles, flowing as they do from the single mind of the founder of Islam, are identical in their style and their general spirit. It is only a minor portion of the Koran that consists of narratives, and these are simply stories of the patriarchs, drawn from degenerate Jewish and Christian sources, without any direct acquaintance on the part of Mohammed with the Old Testament records. Islam is pre-eminently the religion of a book held to be supernatural in its origin, with nothing before it, or beneath it, or after it.

Various as the books of the Bible are, however, in authorship, themes, and style, it is no exaggeration to say that one spirit animates them. He who approaches them in a merely critical, much more in a carping, temper, may miss the perception of it. A certain activity of conscience and moral sensibility may be requisite for the discernment and appreciation of it. This is not to fall back on a mere subjective impression, invalid except for the individual who experiences it. A deaf man or a man with no ear for music

might as reasonably bring the same objection to one who is thrilled by an oratorio of Handel or a symphony of Beethoven. I am credibly informed that a noted American champion of disbelief not long ago, on his way home from a visit to Europe, made the remark with all sincerity that the admiration expressed for the masterpieces of the great painters and sculptors is all a pure affectation, having no better ground than a contagious fashion, and that there is really nothing in these world-famed works of art to merit praise or elicit enthusiasm. But where perceptions, be they æsthetic or moral and religious, are confined to no single breast; where they are awakened in a vast number of human beings, and are to a great degree independent of time and place and of peculiarities of race and education; and where, moreover, they stand related to the noblest development of character as their concomitant or fruit,—they must be admitted to have a catholic worth. They become equivalent to an objective proof. It is vain to decry them as morbid fancies. They are not to be dismissed as the dreams of a mystic. They are the voice of human nature,— a recognition by man of realities, the denial of which on the part of individuals here or there simply argues an abnormal constitution, or an "atrophy" of powers, an eccentric quality of some kind in the dissenting sceptic. How shall we designate this peculiar characteristic of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, taken as a whole? It may be denominated the spirit of holiness. It pervades the Bible as an atmosphere.

It imparts to it, if one may so say, a supernal quality, — a quality not of earth. Here are not speculations uttered by sages about man's nature, duty, or destiny. Here are not precepts such as may be read in the wisest of the heathen, — for example, in Plato or Epictetus, or in the pensive chapters of the philosophic Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Where there is some likeness in the content, the tone is dissimilar. We feel the breath of God. To say that the ethical injunctions of the Bible are "morality touched with emotion," is too vague a description. It is morality inculcated as by a voice out of the unseen. Underlying all is the relation, taken for granted more often than formally asserted, of man to God and eternity. Sanctions reaching out beyond this world of time and space give a solemn emphasis to the commandment. And the distinction here accorded to the Bible belongs to the Old Testament as well as to the New. Attempts have been made in ancient and modern times to sever the two parts of the book and to discard the earlier collection. Such was the proceeding of Marcion in the second century, and like views have been brought forward again and again in recent times. It is not the force of a settled tradition that has baffled every such enterprise. It is not even the recognition accorded to the Old Testament by the New which has been the prime obstacle in the way of endeavors of this nature. Rather is it the consciousness that the two parts of the Bible, differ as they may, are not at bottom incongruous and hostile, and a prevailing sense

of the fact that grand elements belong to them in common. The same spirit of holiness pervades them both, unites them, and lifts them out of the category of literature in general. The Bible not only interprets God, in his holiness and unfathomable love and pity, to man, it is the interpreter of man to himself. Coleridge tells us that, having striven to cast aside all prejudice, he perused the books of the Old and the New Testaments, — "each book as a whole, and also as an integral part." "And need I say," he testifies, "that I have met everywhere more or less copious sources of truth and power and purifying impulses; that I have found words for my most inmost thoughts, songs for my joy, utterances for my hidden griefs, and pleadings for my shame and feebleness? In short, whatever *finds* me, bears witness for itself that it has proceeded from a Holy Spirit, even from the same Spirit which of old entered into the prophets." This is not the experience of one mind only, but of a multitude out of many kindreds and tongues, age after age.

It is true that in thus characterizing the Bible, discriminations are to be made. Not all its books are in this regard, in their power to sound the deep places of the soul, on a level. We find ourselves from the beginning in an elevated region, yet a region where there are hills and valleys. It is vain to pretend that, in the quality referred to, all parts of the Bible are on the same plane. Isaiah and the Psalms, John the Evangelist and the leading Epistles of Paul, are

among the portions of the book that rise like lofty peaks in a mountain range. There are many pages within the compass of the canon which, while not without their significance and value as parts of the collection, lack comparatively the spiritual quality which I have attempted to point out. Most readers of Scripture seldom turn to them. There is another fact to be noticed here. There are parts of the Bible which it is hard to understand. Wholesale assertions about the perspicuity of Scripture have to be qualified. The learning of the most erudite scholars and the sagacity of the most expert critics fail to decipher the meaning of a not inconsiderable number of passages in the sacred volume. Protestants have always been obliged to encounter the Roman Catholic objection to the popular use of the Scriptures, that they cannot be understood by the generality of readers. The only way of meeting the objection is that adopted by Chillingworth; namely, to insist that all essential truth — truth essential to salvation and the conduct of life — is easily discernible on their pages. In this answer it is tacitly conceded that there is left a pretty broad margin which is — to the common man, to say the least — obscure. Even one of the canonical writers pronounces some things in the Epistles of Paul abstruse (2 Peter iii. 16). Why is this so? it might be asked; why all these dark places in Scripture, if it was written for the direct purpose of serving as an authoritative text-book in religion? When one considers the difficulties of the Bible, not in any captious spirit,

as if to hunt up materials for an attack, but fairly and dispassionately; when one looks at the difficulties which obtrude themselves upon the attention of those who are at all familiar with modern discoveries in natural and physical science, and with modern studies in history and ethnology; still more, when one takes into view moral difficulties in certain parts of biblical doctrine, especially in portions of the Old Testament, — one may be pardoned for inquiring, Was this body of writings, in its primary intention, designed to be a manual of religious and ethical instruction? We may concede joyfully a high providential purpose in connection with the composition of the books which it contains, with their preservation, — although it must be remembered that they themselves allude to lost books which were regarded evidently as of equal authority with those in the canon, — and with their foreseen place and office in the Christian Church. But this is quite different from saying that they were originally composed with all this in view on the part of their authors. Especially does it leave out of sight a fact respecting the Scriptures which is in the highest degree important for the understanding and the right use of them, — a fact that furnishes a clew for the solution of the major part of the difficulties which have been adverted to.

The thesis to be here propounded is this: It was not the Scriptures that made the religion, but the religion that made the Scriptures. And the religion was no abstract body of doctrine standing apart from

the life of humanity. The Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments are the offshoot of a great historical movement, begun and carried forward to its consummation by an agency supernatural and divine, yet a movement that is, notwithstanding, an integral part of the history of our race. The roots of the sacred literature must be sought in the historical events and transactions that gave rise to it. It were as strange an error to consider the records of the French Revolution, the memoirs of the leaders and minor actors, the discourses and expositions called forth, at the time and afterwards, by this series of momentous events, the songs and ballads of that stormy period, — to consider these multiform writings the Revolution itself, and in a confused way to confound them with it, as it is to identify the books of the Bible with the religion out of which they sprang. To see the justice of this remark, it is only needful to glance at the origin of the New Testament Scriptures. John the Baptist wrote nothing. Jesus wrote nothing. He lived and taught, he gathered about him a band of disciples, he died and rose from the dead, and the Holy Spirit, the source of a new spiritual power and enlightenment, descended upon his disciples. Jesus laid the foundation for an organization of his followers. He created a society. It was not books that had been written or that were to be written that he styled "the light of the world" and the "salt of the earth." It was the men who believed in him and followed him. It was through them personally that the

good which he brought to mankind was to be diffused abroad. By them the proclamation of God's forgiveness and love, or the Gospel, was made. Some time elapsed before anything was written, before even the sayings and doings of Jesus were recorded. It was the living interest taken in those real occurrences, — a curiosity on the part of Christians to know more of them, and, as we learn from the introduction of Luke's first narrative, an increasing sense of the value of a correct knowledge of them, — that occasioned the composition of the four Gospels. The book of Acts owes its existence to a similar cause. As to the Epistles, of course the churches had to be founded before they could be addressed. It is desirable to remember that Christianity was preached and believed in before anything was written about it. In an age of letters it was inevitable that the events which form the subject of the New Testament should very soon give birth to writings. We can understand why it was impossible that the American civil war should pass by without giving rise to the composition of letters by those actively engaged in it, and the publication of books of history and reminiscence. There was a like impossibility in the case of the planting of Christianity by Christ and the Apostles. If the number of those who desired to know the facts and to be taught the significance of them was at the outset small, it rapidly increased, and their interest in the subject was deep and absorbing. Of course the creation of the New Testament literature was an act of

Providence of essential consequence in its bearing on the subsequent propagation of the Christian faith. Our business is now with the second causes that led to it, and, in particular, with its relation to the historical facts out of which, as from a fruitful soil, it grew up. What has just been said of the New Testament is applicable to the Old. Stretching along, as it were, underneath the heterogeneous books that make up the Old Testament, — heterogeneous as to their particular themes and their style, — is the groundwork of history, of the history of God's dealings with the nation of Israel in earlier and later times. This history is related in specifically historical writings. But the historical situation determines the character and gives color to the form of the books which do not belong under this head. For example, the prophecies of Isaiah are a series of fervent discourses having reference to the circumstances of those to whom they were in the first instance directed. The prophets were preachers of righteousness, — preachers to their own generation. Prediction was not a prime, but an incidental and subsidiary, function of their office. Psalms and Proverbs embody the devotional sentiments and the practical philosophy of living men at definite epochs in the career of the Hebrew people. It need not be said that we do not forget the inspiration of the prophets and the quality of their utterances, which is dependent upon inspiration, although the fact of the divine call of the several prophets, in the exigencies in which they appeared, is part and

parcel of the series of historical events. It is simply meant that, be the peculiarity of the Old Testament writings which is derived from supernatural influence what it may, the discourses of Isaiah and the Proverbs of the wise man or men who were the authors of them, have an historical basis not less real and substantial than is true of the sermons of Jonathan Edwards and the maxims of Franklin in "Poor Richard's Almanac." When the first martyr Stephen spoke for the Christian cause before the Jewish council, he spread before them an array of historical occurrences. He went back to God's disclosure of himself to Abraham in the far-off time, and passed in review, one after another, leading personages and facts of the past down to the mission and death of the Righteous One. In the same spirit the Apostle Paul traces everything back to a person, — to Abraham and to his personal convictions respecting God. He was "the father of all them that believe," the founder of a people becoming more and more numerous, and finally bursting the confines of national kinship.

At the same time the Apostle Paul understood the value of the Scriptures. It was the signal advantage of the Jews that to them had been committed "the oracles of God." A sacred deposit had been intrusted to them. The promises of God recorded in the ancient Scriptures were in their hands. It is not only as inspired interpreters of the facts that prophets and apostles are the organs of revelation. They are inspired to look forward and partly lift the curtain that

veils the future. Thus they discharge an office in preparing the way for subsequent scenes and events in the drama of Providence as it gradually unfolds itself.

The fundamental reality is not the Bible, it is the kingdom of God. This is not a notion. Rather is it a real historical fact, and the grandest of all facts. No other kingdom or commonwealth ever had a more substantial being. It is older than any other; it has proved itself stronger and more enduring than any other; if there is any good ground for the Christian's faith, it will embrace or overspread them all. What is this kingdom? It is the society of believers in God, — the society of his loyal subjects and children. In its immature stage, under the old dispensation, it existed in the form of an organized political community. Among the nations there lived one people which had true thoughts respecting God, into whose hearts he put true thoughts respecting himself. They became conscious — it was he who inspired them with the consciousness — of standing in an immediate, peculiar relation to him. That they were a "chosen people" was a conviction ineradicably planted within them. Has not this conviction of theirs been verified in the subsequent history of mankind? They were made to feel that they were not thus distinguished for their own sake, or on account of any merit of their own, but were chosen to be witnesses for God to the rest of mankind. There was a divine purpose of redemption, in which the entire race was to have

a share. In the divine intent, to recover mankind from evil, and to make the whole earth the abode of righteousness and peace, was the ultimate goal. The civil polity and the laws of the chosen people were to reflect the will of God as made known from time to time through holy and inspired men. The whole course of their lives was to be regulated by prescriptions issuing from the same divine source. After the monarchical form of government was established, revelation still remained the source of law. Side by side with the kings there stood the prophets to declare the divine will, to rebuke the iniquitous ruler, and, if need be, to exhort the people to disobedience. In the complex progress of the world towards the ideal of human perfection, other peoples, on the plane of nature, had their respective parts to fulfil. The one supreme concern of this Hebrew nation was, and was felt to be, religion. Their function among the nations of the earth was consciously wrapped up in this one interest. As they well knew, other religions besides their own were national. All ancient religions were national.

But other religions were on false foundations, and were doomed to pass away. When the political independence of the Israelites was lost, their civil polity shattered, the conquered people dragged off into idolatrous lands, this consciousness of being possessed of the true religion, and of a grand and triumphant future awaiting them, not only survived but grew more confident. It not only outlived political ruin;

under overwhelming calamities it burned with a more intense fervor. More strange than all, there was a foresight of a great advance to be made in the intrinsic character of this divinely given religion, as well as in the extent of the dominion to be gained by it. The basis of the religion was the covenant of God with the people. But the days were to come when there was to be "a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." Religion was one day to become more spiritual; obedience would then no longer be legal or constrained, but spontaneous; the knowledge of God and his ways would be confined to no class, but would be diffused among all; forgiveness would be full and free. Such is the remarkable prediction of the prophet Jeremiah. Centuries flowed on, the great hope was a hope deferred; but the epoch thus foreseen at last arrived. The Person through whom was to be achieved this vast revolution and expansion of the kingdom, dimly discerned from afar in certain grand outlines, at length appeared. Jesus, the Christ, became the founder of a spiritual and universal society. Whoever will look into the Gospels will see that it was in this character of the head of a kingdom that he appeared. It was of the kingdom of God that John, the forerunner, spoke, as near at hand. It was for professing to be a king, however the nature of that claim was misrepresented by his accusers, that Christ was put to death. The prophecy began to be realized when he commenced to teach and to attract to himself

disciples. The kingdom was there. This he taught when, in answer to the question when the kingdom was to begin to be, he said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation;" "lo! . . . the kingdom of God is within you," or in the midst of you. The kingdom was constituted by Jesus and the group of disciples who acknowledged him as Lord and Master, and who, like him, were devoted to the doing of the Father's will. This last was the criterion of membership in the kingdom, and of a title to its blessings. Those who were one with Jesus in this filial allegiance were hailed by him as brother and sister and mother. Yet the consummation of the kingdom lay in the future. Hence the kingdom, although a present reality, was a kingdom in the bud, and therefore a kingdom to come, — to come in a double sense, in its moral progress among mankind, and in mysterious final scenes of judgment and victory. So that the prayer of all disciples was still to be, "Thy kingdom come," — a supplication that points both to the continuous progress and transforming influence of the Gospel in the world, and to the goal of that progress, the final epoch. Precisely how "the kingdom of Christ" or "the kingdom of heaven" should be defined is a point on which all are not agreed. It was declared by Jesus not to be a "kingdom of this world." Its origin was not earthly, but from above. It was not, like human sovereignties, to be maintained and spread by force. The end of the Founder's mission was to bear witness

to the truth. The kingdom was to be made up of those who heard his voice, who believed and obeyed the witness which he gave. In the ancient era of the Church there was the Byzantine idea, which tended to regard the Christian state, with the Roman emperor at its head, as the realization of the kingdom. In the West it was the Church in its visible organization under the Papacy that was identified with the kingdom of Christ. A broader view would bring within the circumference of the kingdom all the baptized, in whatever Christian fold. A still broader view is that which includes within its pale all souls who, accepting Christ as their Lord and Saviour, live to do the Father's will.

No view of the divine kingdom is adequate which fails to see that the end of its establishment is the transformation of human society. The rescue of individuals from sin and punishment is far from being the whole good to be achieved through the instrumentality of revealed religion. Its ethical relations are never to be ignored or undervalued. It is here on earth that the will of God is to be done. It is here that the desert is "to rejoice, and blossom as the rose." The aim of the divine kingdom was and is to renovate political and social life. "Judaism," a recent writer has well said, "was not a religion merely, but a polity, its aim being the establishment of righteousness in the relations of men within the commonwealth; the political and moral laws and the national organization form its central point, its kings and judges being in

the fullest sense ministers of God." Nothing less was designed by the later, the Christian, dispensation, following upon the earlier, than "the establishment and maintenance of true relations throughout the whole body of a united and organized humanity, under the influence of the Christian spirit of righteousness and love." As a means to this end the Church exists, — an organized community, consisting of a portion of human society in which the renewing power of the Gospel has been experienced.

One might as well doubt whether the sun is in the sky as to question the reality of that new creation which gives its distinctive character to "the Christian era." Out of Judaism there has come into being a spiritual and universal society, however it may be more precisely defined, and whatever disputes may exist as to its boundaries. It may be added here that all organized bodies which hold the Christian faith, including the Church of Rome as well as Protestants, unite in pronouncing that the complete deposit of revealed truth was with Christ and the Apostles. The Church of Rome makes tradition an authorized channel for the transmission of this truth. But all agree that Christianity is the absolute religion. There is a progress in the understanding of it, from age to age. But the religion itself is not defective, and therefore is not perfectible. Christianity is not to be put in the same category with the ethnic religions, which contain an admixture of error, and are capable of being indefinitely improved. The religion of the

Gospel is absolute. The allegiance of the follower of Christ is unqualified. "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am."

Keeping in view this historic kingdom, which stands forth as an objective reality, beginning in the distant past and carried forward to its perfected form by Jesus of Nazareth, we have to inquire what is the relation of the Holy Scriptures to it. The answer is that they are the documents that make us acquainted with the kingdom in its consecutive stages up to its completed form. In the Scriptures we are made acquainted with the facts and the meaning of the facts. And as in the case of all documentary materials viewed in contrast with literary products of later elaboration, we are brought face to face with the historic transactions and with the persons who took part in them. This is the peculiar character of the Scriptures, and is at once the secret of their transcendent value and the occasion of countless obscurities and difficulties. By no other means could we become possessed of knowledge so immediate and so vivid. Yet they give occasion for the same sort of inquiries that always devolve, in historical investigation, on those who delve in the sources.

Let us take an illustration from secular history. We will suppose that the later narratives, such as those of Bancroft and Palfrey, by which a New Englander learns the origin and growth of the communities to which he belongs, and their historic relations to other parts of America, had not been written, — the

narratives, we mean, which are based on documentary materials, including under this head prior accounts whose authors stood nearer to the circumstances which they relate than the historians of to-day. We are shut up, we will imagine, to this mass of documentary materials. There is Bradford's pathetic story of the Pilgrims, of their flight from their English home to Holland, their voyage across the Atlantic, their settlement and their experiences at Plymouth. We have other writings also, — the "Compact of Government" drawn up in the cabin of the "Mayflower;" the diary and the letters of John Winthrop, the Massachusetts governor; the earlier and later codes of colonial law; the "Bay Psalm Book;" Cotton Mather's "Magnalia;" later still, the history of Hutchinson; and along with other productions we have discourses of the most influential preachers in the successive generations. As we approach the epoch of the Revolution we have the letters and speeches of the patriotic leaders; the records of the first congresses, local and general; the Declaration of Independence; contemporary accounts of the war that followed; the Constitution of the United States, and expositions of it by Madison and others who took part in framing it; official papers of the first President and his Cabinet, etc. Imagine a comprehensive collection of these documents. It would consist of prose and poetry, of orations, disquisitions, letters, and so forth. Obviously there would be inconveniences, especially to an untrained, unlearned student. There would be things

hard to understand, obscure allusions, apparent and real discrepancies of more or less consequence. A consecutive history prepared by a modern student of sound, critical judgment would plainly have its advantages. But one superlative advantage it would fail to have. The reader would not, in anything like an equal degree, be brought into the atmosphere of the former days. He would not, in anything like an equal degree, come into living contact with the events and into direct personal intercourse with the participants in them. His impressions, if in some particulars more exact and more systematic, would lack the color, would want the vividness, which are to be caught only from the documentary sources. The difference is like that between a treatise on geography, or even the descriptions of a traveller, and an actual journey through a country which we seek to know. Let one read either of the numerous lives of Jesus which have been written by learned scholars in recent times, even when imaginative power reinforces the erudition of the author, and then turn to the pages of the Evangelists. He will feel at once the difference between second-hand and first-hand accounts; between those who see through their own eyes and those who have to use the eyes of others. The modern scholars furnish us with collateral information of value, illustrative of the Gospels; they collate the several narrators; they apply the canons of historical criticism with more or less skill: but where is that living, speaking portrait of Jesus, of his walk and his talk, which the

original historians, the Apostles and their companions, give us? It is the difference between the herbarium and the leaves and flowers in field or forest. In the herbarium the classification is better, but we miss the bright hues and the perfume of the blossoms. To the botanist the herbarium is important, and botany is a useful science in its place. But the rose-bush, or a grape-vine with the clusters of fruit hanging upon it, has a charm of its own which the botanist not more than the unlettered man would be willing to spare.

The beginnings of old kingdoms and empires are commonly obscure. They start on their career in the twilight. It is not until the day has fairly dawned, until some progress has been made on the path of civilization, that written records arise to be transmitted to later times. Even then contemporary writings are likely to be scanty and fragmentary. Traditions exist and are handed down, but they are subject to the influences that affect the oral transmission of narrative matter from generation to generation. Thus when the past comes to be studied in an enlightened age, there is no escape from the necessity of historical criticism. The historical student, like other laborers, has to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. The facts of a remote time are to be reached only by exploring in places where the light is dim. Great rivers may traverse empires, spreading fertility along their banks, but we have to hunt for their sources. If the circumstances of the rise of the kingdom of God

should be found to accord with this analogy, there would be no cause for wonder. There would be no ground afforded for a naturalistic theory as to the origin of that kingdom, unless indeed it were mistakenly imagined that the primary design of God was not to plant religion in the souls of men, to raise up a people, and to work out historically the redemption of mankind, but rather to produce a body of writings.

In this day of critical research it is the early part of the Old Testament history respecting which debates and perplexities most frequently arise. These relate largely to the Pentateuch, and the traditional views relative to its authorship. It is interesting to observe, however, that scholars of high repute, in what is called the "advanced" school, who assign so great a part of the Pentateuchal legislation, as well as the accompanying narrative matter, to a later than the Mosaic period, do not feel justified by their interpretations of the evidence in questioning the existence of Moses, or the grandeur of his work as a leader, lawgiver, and prophet. For example, Reuss, who claims to have been first in the field with the ideas which his pupil, Graf, independently developed, says: "Moses was for all times the lawgiver of Israel. . . . There may be a dispute as to what strictly belongs to him. But his spirit — in this proving itself to be a divine spirit — ruled the judgment of the centuries, and impressed on the national development its own stamp and direction. The continuers of his work, even the most gifted and energetic, and at the turning-points of history, did not

find it needful to forget or to ignore his name, which a firm and thankful tradition connected with everything that was great and useful," etc. In addition to what he did in revealing a purer knowledge of God in the midst of the barbarism of the heathen, says Reuss, "there belongs to him without doubt the regulation and ordering of the ritual as it afterwards existed in Israel, at least in its outlines." A critic as little wedded to accepted views as Hermann Schultz finds it unreasonable to call in question the fact of the revelation of God to Moses at Mount Sinai. He styles Moses "the man who was properly the founder of the true religion, the effects of whose influence conditioned the entire religious development of Israel. . . . Moses is, with the exception of Jesus, the most important of the religious personages concerning whom really trustworthy information remains to us." So it continues true, even in the creed of the critics of every stripe, that "the law came by Moses" as well as "grace and truth by Jesus Christ."

It is confessed on all hands that when we reach the writings of the prophets we stand on the firmest historical ground. What the religion of Israel was in the eighth century B. C., the great age of prophecy, is clearly and vividly exhibited to us in these writings. Whatever the prophets may not presuppose, they certainly do imply a course of teaching and of revelation, extending far back of their day. Revelation is not magic, and the lofty plane on which the prophets are found to stand was not

reached at a single bound. Not until after the sun has slowly climbed the sky does it shine down upon us in the blaze of noonday. Amos, the shepherd of Tekoa, uttered his prophecies early in the eighth century. It was to Israel that he spoke, the people whom the Lord had "brought up out of the land of Egypt," saying, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." Nothing can surpass the eloquence in which the universal sovereignty of God is set forth. It is "he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought." It is "he that maketh the Pleiades and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death" — or the deep darkness — "into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night; that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth; . . . that bringeth sudden destruction upon the strong, so that destruction cometh upon the fortress." In the prophets of that age the nations of the world, even the mighty Assyrian power that was trampling kingdoms under foot, and advancing seemingly to universal dominion, are in the hand of God and are managed for his purposes. "This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the Lord of Hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" The Assyrian, the Lord exclaims, is "the rod of mine anger. . . . Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but

it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few." The religion which embodied so lofty conceptions of God, both of his power and moral attributes, and of his providential plan, was not born in a day. The religion which had within itself vitality enough to survive the complete overthrow of national independence, and even to rise to more exalted heights of faith and devotion, must have had a long history behind it. There must have been, as one has said, a tap-root extending far down in the earth. There is no rational way of dispensing with the creative and organizing influence of Moses in the Hebrew commonwealth and religion. But behind Moses, in the mist of a much more remote antiquity, stands the figure of Abraham, the progenitor of many nations. Against the extreme scepticism that would sweep off the stage of authentic history this heroic character, the appeal may be made to the judgment of a scholar like Dillmann, whose unsurpassed learning and impartiality are acknowledged by all the critics. "The possibility at least," says Dillmann, "that out of the period from the twenty-second to the twentieth century before Christ historical personages may live on in the recollection of after times cannot on general grounds be contested. We are not surprised when among the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Assyrians written historical memorials from those centuries confront us. Why then should not the Israelites, when they appear, somewhere about the year 1500, upon the theatre of history, have preserved historical recollections out of

that time ?" Then, after pointing out that the oldest Hebrew historians manifest a consciousness of the difference between those old times and the later with which they are conversant, Dillmann adds: "The main thing, however, is that the entire work of Moses admits of no historical explanation except on the supposition of a preparatory, comparatively pure type of religion [*eine Vorstufe höherer Religion*], such as, according to Genesis, belonged to those Fathers; and such a higher form of religion of necessity pre-supposes personal agents or standard-bearers. As states can be built up only through leading spirits or heroes, in like manner and much more are advances in matters of religion linked to persons rising above their fellows; and the memory of them is wont to abide in the minds of those coming after who have gathered about their faith as a centre, and to hold on more persistently than even the recollection of political founders. As the head of a purer belief in God in the midst of the darkening power of heathenism that had already come in; as a man eminent for his sense of God and faith in him, who was accustomed to listen for the voice of God and to follow his guidance in all the exigencies and events of his life; as one who advanced in the knowledge of the nature and will of God, and implanted this higher knowledge in his household and among those about him, — thus do the ancestral legends in Genesis represent Abraham. His existence there has in it so little that is incredible that rather are we obliged to assume it, unless we throw

overboard, at the same time, as unhistorical the connection of Moses with the God of the Fathers." Dillmann calls special attention to the credibility of the narrative, in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, of the arming by Abraham of his dependents for the rescue of Lot, taken captive by Chedorlaomer and his allied kings. It is a narrative which in various particulars is corroborated by the cuneiform inscriptions. The substance of the narrative seems to have been drawn by the Hebrew writers from written sources east of the Jordan. On the whole, then, until stronger evidence to the contrary shall be adduced than has yet been found, we are justified in believing that Abraham lived, and was an immigrant from Chaldæa, leaving his kindred that he might escape from the contagion of the incoming and spreading idolatry. These, be it remembered, are historical questions such as might present themselves in connection with the rise of Roman power or with the Saxon invasion of England. Even if they are variously answered, the reality of the kingdom of God, and the office it has fulfilled in the course of human history, remain as undeniable facts.

In the prolegomena to the annals of Israel as an organized community, — becoming such by the leadership and legislation of Moses, — and prior to the story of the patriarchs, we find the opening chapters of Genesis, with their narratives: some of them double, indicative, many scholars judge, of distinct sources, — narratives of the creation and of the primal transgres-

sion, of the flood, of the division and dispersion of mankind. In these narratives are mingled fragments of ballads, genealogies, etc., — all these materials being strung together on a chronological thread. Here we have the background of Hebrew history. The resemblance of the contents of these chapters to the legends of kindred nations, especially the Assyrians and Babylonians, is too marked to be the result of accident; yet at the same time the dissimilarity is equally striking. Both call for explanation, — the unlikeness not less than the likeness. There pervade the Genesis stories a pure theism and the ethical quality which are defining characteristics of the Old Testament religion as a whole. They are thus in their inward spirit of a piece with Revelation, and even homogeneous with Revelation in the final or Christian stage of its advancement. Without exaggeration it has been said of the first three chapters of Genesis that they contain more moral and religious truth than all other books taken together which have been written independently of the Bible. Profound thinkers have discerned in the account of the temptation and fall a psychological depth which lends support to the belief that its kernel was a primeval tradition, however impossible it is to draw the exact line between the literal facts and the accretion of symbol that has gathered about them. Whence were these ancient narratives in the introductory part of Genesis derived? How and when did they originate? That they were brought in at a late day in the development of the Hebrew

religion, from Assyrian and Babylonian sources, is a theory fraught with improbabilities. It would imply that for an indefinitely long period the Hebrews were content to be destitute of any conceptions respecting the origin of things and the early life of mankind. It implies, moreover, that they were ready to borrow mythological tales from their heathen neighbors and oppressors. In the present state of knowledge no hypothesis is so probable as that when Abraham and his companions left their primitive home they brought with them the traditions and beliefs, as to the past, of the race to which they belonged. In that region these may not then have been disfigured to the same extent as afterwards by the admixture of mythological matter. In the light of the revelation of God made to Abraham and to his descendants, this stock of inherited narrative was purged of whatever dross of heathenism was intermingled with it. The primeval traditions and tales were so transformed as not to clash with the fundamental principles of revealed religion, and were thus left to serve as an adequate vehicle for conveying essentially right religious impressions, until the age should arrive when physical science and historical investigation should supply the knowledge which then, at the dawn of civilization, it would not have been possible for men to comprehend, as it was not the office of Revelation to communicate. If the Hebrews were left, for example, to share in the belief of their ancestors that the world was made in a week's time, they were not worse off than Christians have been until within a

century past. It is well to dispossess ourselves of the notion that the Divine Author of Revelation began with casting out of men's minds the whole stock of beliefs which were included in their inheritance. There was a world of knowledge about the way of creation and other mundane things which natural science and historical study in after times would unfold to view. And natural science and historical study are not alien and inimical to religion. They too are methods through which God in another way discloses truth to men.

From the historical point of view the student — in fact, every one who desires to find out what really occurred in the past — craves contemporary evidence of a trustworthy nature. Those who were immediately concerned in the events, and those who were in a position to be correctly informed in relation to them, are the competent witnesses. Tradition is of no value except so far as their testimony can be reasonably thought to be contained in it. The chief interest which the historical inquirer has in criticism applied to any portion of the Bible is from the bearing of it on this question: Have we contemporary evidence or its fair equivalent? As regards the life of Jesus and the planting of the Church, including both the facts and the teaching, there can be no reasonable doubt. The genuineness of the leading Epistles of Paul has not been questioned at the present day by the most learned sceptics, the starting-point of whose disbelief, be it observed, is commonly the assumed

demands of speculative philosophy far more than real difficulties of an historical nature. But these Epistles imply on the part of the Apostles — the pupils, friends, and companions of Jesus — the testimony to the fact of his resurrection. It is in the highest degree improbable that they could have believed it had they not been prepared, by their real or supposed previous observation of exertions of miraculous power by Jesus, for giving credence to so astonishing a miracle. We are not left, however, to inference in respect to this point. The assertion is often thrown out that we have no good evidence of the existence of the Gospels prior to the second century. But the assertion is made, despite proofs that ought to satisfy every candid person. There is no reason to doubt, and there are the strongest reasons to conclude, that the first three Gospels were written within the limits of the generation contemporary with the events recorded, and were written by perfectly veracious persons who had the means of knowing what the facts were which they undertook to record. The effort to bring the Fourth Gospel down into the second century, and to ascribe its authorship to any other than to the Apostle John, encounters difficulties far more serious than those which it aims to avoid; and the only plausible alternative theory, where the Johannine authorship is given up, is that the book was composed by one of his disciples.

We hear it said that in that age, the age of Josephus and of Tacitus, there was no appreciation of

the nature and the value of testimony. Sweeping remarks of this nature respecting civilized communities at an epoch several centuries after the death of Aristotle, may be left without refutation. The statement is sometimes so qualified as to make it applicable only to the Gospel writers. This would imply that Jesus Christ selected twelve persons to bear him company, and to relate to others what they had heard and seen, who were destitute of the essential qualifications of witnesses, and that no discipline in sobriety of mind and truthfulness resulted from their close and continued association with him. Assumptions of this character are overthrown by a little attention to the New Testament writings. Open the earliest of the Gospels, that of Mark, an attendant of Peter. We read: "And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together" (xiv. 55, 56). This looks as if the Evangelist, and those from whom he received his information, had some idea of the need of testimony to substantiate assertions, and of the necessity of comparing it and sifting it. Open the Gospel of Luke, an attendant of Paul, and hear him say that the reason of his writing was that — for so the passage is correctly rendered in the Revised Version — he had "traced the course of all things accurately from the first," having derived his information, as he adds, from "eye-witnesses." This looks as if Luke were aware of

the importance of being careful not to mistake fiction for fact, and understood the importance of going to the right sources of information. "Ye are witnesses of these things," are words of Jesus to the disciples, which Luke also records. Peter, as we learn from the Acts, declared to his fellow-believers that on account of the defection of Judas it was requisite to choose another in his place from those who had been with the Apostles all through the public ministry of Jesus, "beginning from the baptism of John." And why from this class alone? Let Peter answer: "To become a witness with us of his resurrection." This looks as if the Apostle Peter understood what the function of the Apostles was, what they had been chosen for, and what were the proper qualifications for the office. This account of the proposal of Peter is a portion of the book of Acts which has been accepted even by Baur and his followers as authentic history. Notice how carefully the Apostle Paul, in the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, reviews the testimony of the Apostles to the resurrection of Jesus, and his emphatic declaration, "If Christ be not risen . . . we are found false witnesses." It is evident, as one has said, that Paul was no easy convert.

The Disciples, — whose testimony makes up the contents of the Gospels, — in their absorption in what they had seen and heard, and in their sense of its transcendent interest and importance, forgot themselves. They were not in a mood to spin tales out of

their own fancy. And their situation left no room for idle musing. They found it to be as they had been forewarned; they were brought before magistrates and called on to give their reasons for believing in Jesus (Matt. x. 18; Luke xxi. 12).

There is another misconception — akin to that just noticed — which is frequently met with. Such was the credulity then and there, we are told, that the miraculous, or what was conceived to be the miraculous, was in the line of ordinary expectation, and gave no shock of surprise. But let us consult the Gospels on this point. From the oldest of the documents we learn that when Jesus healed by a word a helpless paralytic, "they were all amazed," and exclaimed, "We never saw it on this fashion" (Mark ii. 12). The multitude was struck with fear (Matt. ix. 8). On another like occasion they said: "It was never so seen in Israel" (Matt. ix. 33). "Since the world began it was never heard that any one opened the eyes of a man born blind." Thus spoke the man on whom the miracle had been wrought (John ix. 32).

Christianity is a religion of facts. They are not appendages, — ornaments, so to speak, about the neck of a king, with regard to which it matters not whether they are worn or discarded. Luther and the other Reformers were wise in feeling "the extreme danger of substituting their belief for the object of it, and so destroying the reality of both." Miracles are more than proofs; they are constituent elements of Revelation, which unveils not only the mercy and tender-

ness, but also the power of God, and his sovereignty over nature. They were, moreover, symbols of the spiritual energy to go forth from the Saviour's person and work in the world. Not only are they emblems of this energy, they inspire confidence in its efficacy. "They become arguments of trust, a storehouse of powerful images that invigorate courage and stimulate hope." They were prophetic of the blessings, outward as well as inward, to flow out to mankind in the train of his redemptive agency. "The character of Jesus," to quote the words of Horace Bushnell, "is ever shining with and through them, in clear self-evidence, leaving them never to stand as raw wonders only of might, but covering them with glory, as tokens of a heavenly love, and acts that only suit the proportions of his personal greatness and majesty." The sign-seeking spirit, the appetite for marvels, the disposition to find nowhere except in miracles evidence of God's presence and of his own mission from God, the demand for an extraordinary, stupendous sign from heaven, Jesus rebuked. But this is all. Especially is the resurrection the perfecting of his own person, the "first-fruits" as well as the sign of the redemption of man's entire being. It is consistent for those to reject the miracles who, like the author of "Robert Elsmere," hold that "personality or intelligence" has no meaning "as applied to God." The real, but often unperceived, issue is between a distinct theism, in which the personality of God, as well as of man, is fully recognized, and a real, though it be a

vague, undefined pantheism. The attempt to resolve the miracles of the Gospel into subjective experiences is to dissolve Christianity into thin air. It properly belongs in a scheme of pantheistic idealism. The remark that "miracles do not now occur," if intended as an argument, is fallacious. The questions ought to be whether in case Jesus Christ were on the earth they would not occur, and whether they were not to be expected at the introduction of that spiritual and universal society of which he was the founder. That nature is not supreme, and man a slave to blind laws, it was surely well for the divine Head of the new kingdom to demonstrate, and thus to meet the yearnings of the race for the revelation of a power superior to material forces. Unless there is a demonstration that "the world is subject to God, and not to chance or nature; that there is an order, far more beautiful and perfect than that of sun and stars, in which men are intended to abide, and in which everything that is great and noble within them receives its full development, — I see not how this materialist superstition can fail to become the creed of every nation, and to bring about the decay of all institutions and political life, all feeling, affection, hope." "If," adds Maurice, from whom the foregoing passage is quoted, "Christianity be the manifestation of a spiritual kingdom; if it be the satisfaction of the dreams of past ages; if it be that which was to exhibit through all the complications of after ages what is the law which governs them, and who is the Giver of that law, — then we

cannot see how it could enter the world without miracles, or how those miracles should not be such as the Bible affirms that they were." If the stories of the miracles of Christ are "in accordance with the scriptural idea of the Founder of a spiritual and universal kingdom, . . . we should require evidence to account for their omission in any record proposing to convey the history of such a person. We should have a right to ask, Why did he give no signs that he came to connect the visible with the invisible world; why did he do nothing to break the yoke of custom and experience, — nothing to show men that the constutition which he pretended to reveal and establish has a true foundation? Take away the miracles, and there is an inexplicable chasm and inconsistency in these records which it would require a vast amount of wit and ingenuity to explain."

It is plain that a great deal of the current criticism of the historical writings of the Bible is affected by a pre-existing bias against the supernatural element in these narratives. There is at the start a prejudice which warps the judgment respecting their date and authorship and their general credibility. This prejudice, when the purpose and scope of Revelation are properly conceived, will be felt to be unwarrantable. At the same time it is evident that the wide concurrence of Christian scholars in rejecting the rigid doctrine of an absolute inerrancy in these historical writings, is owing to no spirit of scepticism of the sort described. Modified conceptions on this

subject have arisen and spread within the Church among students of the Bible who are not lacking in faith or reverence. They have been adopted as an inevitable incident of the conscientious examination and comparison of the writings themselves. That Apostles and Prophets were inspired of God to set forth the contents of divine revelation; that even the historical books composed by them are permeated with the ideas drawn from a supernatural source; that the writings composed by pupils or attendants of the Apostles partake of the same character, and are penetrated with the perceptions that flowed from the authoritative teachers near whom they stood; that misinterpretations of the essential nature of the Gospel were precluded by the agency of the Spirit who was to throw light on the sayings of Christ, and on the events whose meaning was at first so dark to the minds of the disciples, but was to become clear in the retrospect, — all this forms a part of the common faith of Christians. It is another thing to say that, beyond this inspiration, a certain divine assistance was forever at hand, when evangelist or other historian took up his pen, to check him by a negative influence — acting after the manner of the demon of Socrates — when the author was about to misplace the date of an occurrence, or to vary from rigid accuracy in matters of circumstantial detail. What a stupendous miracle would be involved in imparting this impeccable character to so large a body of historical writings as the Bible contains, — writings

which run through so many ages! Of what avail would it be, unless not only the original writers, but also amanuenses and transcribers, were all to be equally guarded to the end of time? Exaggerated statements on this subject are the occasion, at present, of two great evils. One mischievous consequence of them is that the truth and divine origin of Christianity are staked on the literal correctness of even the minutest particulars in the copious narratives of Scripture. The conscientious student, seeing that such views are untenable in the light of fair historical criticism, is virtually bidden to draw the inference that the foundations of the Christian faith are gone. Moreover, some of the most impressive arguments in defence of historical Christianity, which depend on the presence of unessential discrepancies, showing the absence of collusion, and in various other ways confirming the truthfulness of the main features of the narrative, are precluded from being used whenever the obsolescent theory that the biblical narratives are drawn up with the pedantic accuracy of a notary public is still insisted on. It is a conception of inspiration, it may be added, which the sacred historians themselves do not allege. When Luke will indicate to Theophilus that his narrative is to be relied on, he appeals to the opportunities afforded him for getting possession of the facts, through the personal intercourse which he has had with those who were directly cognizant of them. To the historical student the magnifying of dissonances and the for-

cing of harmonies are alike obnoxious. They are equally an affront to the moral sense. They both count for nothing when confronted with a critical tact which sees where the truth lies, divines the secret of inconsistencies, and leaves undetermined whatever the documentary sources offer no means of settling. Nothing that the human hand touches, no record of the past, is utterly free from blemishes. Earl Stanhope (Lord Mahon) writes of the Duke of Wellington: "The conversation turned as to how testimonies vary and how difficult it is to get at a real fact. The Duke gave some instances of it. 'Thus there is one event noted in the world, — the battle of Waterloo, — and you will not find any two people to agree as to the exact hour when it commenced.'" Lord Mahon was unusually accurate and careful in recording what he heard Wellington say; yet he quoted the Duke as having remarked that he had counted "the presence of Napoleon at a battle as equal to a reinforcement of forty thousand men." But the Duke in a memorandum made a correction. "It is very true," he wrote, "that I considered Napoleon's presence in the field to be equal to forty thousand men in the balance. This is a very loose way of talking; but the idea is a very different one from that of his presence at a battle being equal to a reinforcement of forty thousand men." There is a curious lack of agreement in the contemporary records of the last words spoken by Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms, and thus a difference of opi-

nion as to what he really said. On the whole, there is good reason to conclude that the common account accords with the fact; yet this verdict is arrived at only after a careful collation of evidence. Variations not unlike the above meet us in the New Testament historical writings; for example, in the accounts of the denials of Peter, of the crucifixion, of the resurrection. They are not to be got rid of by artificial adjustments. Some of the mosaics formed in this way are mechanical, and anything but edifying. The same critical judgment must be called into exercise that is requisite in dealing with all other historical documents. Is it said that the common man is not possessed of the requisite leisure or skill for such an undertaking? The answer is, first, that neither is he qualified for textual criticism or for making the choice between disputed readings, of which there are so many; secondly, that he is under no greater disadvantage than he is subject to in connection with other authentic narratives, including the most approved histories of his own country; and thirdly, that the impression — the aggregate impression — which is made on the mind may be quite true and adequate, despite a degree of uncertainty in relation to minor circumstances. The presence in the Bible of parallel narratives covering the same field, as in the case of the four Gospels, puts it in our power not only to see how events appeared from somewhat different points of view, but also to combine complementary accounts and to rectify imperfections. It may seem an un-

gracious task to advert even to slight imperfections in a book so precious as the Bible, as it is an ungracious task in a child to touch on the faults of a parent. But there stands the great saying of the Apostle: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." In the case of the writings and of the men the jewel was not to be confounded with the casket that held it. Some there are who are so dazzled by the treasure that they imagine the vessel to be also of gold. Others, seeing that the vessel is earthenware, rashly conclude that its contents are of the same coarse material.

CHAPTER II.

THE GRADUALNESS OF REVELATION.

"First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." This picture Jesus himself drew of the foreseen diffusion of his kingdom. The kingdom was to be "as if a man should cast seed upon the earth." He plants it and leaves it; he sleeps and rises, "night and day." Meantime the seed springs up and grows, "he knoweth not how." It goes through, one after another, the stages of development up to the ripeness of the fruit. A parable, it need scarcely be said, is framed to illustrate one point, and is not to be pressed beyond the intended scope. As rain and sunshine are required for the growth of wheat, we are taught elsewhere that divine influences are needful, and are never disconnected from the operation of the truth in the minds of men. There is enough complementary teaching of Jesus to preclude any mistake or one-sided view in this direction. Yet the parable shows the confidence of Jesus in the perpetuity and progress of his kingdom. There resides in it, so he declared, a self-preserving, self-developing life. The seed, once planted, might be left with entire unconcern as to its growth. In these days, when "develop-

ment" is a word on every tongue, we are often told that the conception of nature and natural law is foreign to the Scriptures. No assertion could be more mistaken. Even on the first page of the Bible, although the design there is to set in the foreground the creative agency of God, we read that the earth was bidden to bring forth the grass, the herb, and the fruit-tree, each yielding, "after his kind," "whose seed is in itself." In the parable of Jesus of which we are speaking, it is said that "the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself," — that is, to transfer the Greek term into English, "automatically." That epithet is chosen which denotes most precisely a self-acting, spontaneous energy, inherent in the seed which Jesus, through his discourses, his acts of mercy and power, and his patience unto death, was sowing in the world. This grand prophetic declaration, uttered in a figure so simple and beautiful, in the ears of a little company of Galileans, was to be wonderfully verified in the coming ages of Christian history.

It is not, however, the progress of Christianity since it was fully introduced by Christ and the Apostles that we have now to consider. The development of the understanding of Christianity on the side of doctrine and of ethics, the advance to a more and more just and enlightened comprehension of the Christian religion, the unveiling of the riches of meaning involved in it, is a fascinating theme. But all this belongs under the head of the *interpretation* of Christianity, that term being used

in a broad sense. The religion of the Gospel means vastly more to-day than it was ever perceived to mean before. This enlarged meaning, however, is not annexed to it or carried into it, but legitimately educed from it, through the ever-widening perceptions of Christian men whom the Spirit of God illuminates. The starry heavens are now what they were of old; there is no enlargement of the stellar universe except that which comes through the increased power and use of the telescope. The globe on which we dwell to-day is the same that it was twenty centuries ago. Yet during the past ages there has been a progressive advance in astronomical and geographical discovery. No one commits the blunder of confounding discovery with creation.

What we have to speak of now is development and progress in the contents of Revelation itself, in the interval between its remotest beginnings and the epoch when the Apostles finally handed it over in its ripe, consummated form to the Church, to be thereafter promulgated throughout the world. Of divine revelation itself the saying is likewise true: "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." The fact that Revelation was progressive, that it went forward like the advance from dawn to noonday, may suggest the hasty, unwarranted conclusion that it was a natural process merely. Some will be quick to leap to this rash inference. As regards natural religion, the fact that creation is found to have been progressive, that unsuspected links unite

its consecutive stages, that the tendency of science is to unveil a certain continuity in nature, leads the shortsighted to ignore the supernatural altogether. They imagine that there is no need to call in God to explain nature except where breaks are met in the chain of mechanical causation. It is enough, they imagine, to be able to trace back the planetary system to a fiery vapor preceding it, as if the existence, or the order, or the beauty, of the astronomic system were thereby explained. If it be true that the plants in their multiplied species or "kinds" spring out of a few primitive germs, or out of only one, the evidence of forethought and will-power in the organization of the vegetable kingdom is not in the least weakened. Nor would it be effaced if the spontaneous generation of the living from the lifeless were an ascertained fact of science. It is another fruit of that same unreflecting tendency to dispense with God where there is observed an orderly progress of phenomena, which leads to the ignoring or denial of the supernatural in connection with the gradually developing religion of redemption. The critical researches of the time disclose bonds of connection between successive stages of religious and moral teaching in the sacred volume. As in geology, there is less need than was formerly thought to fall back on the supposition of catastrophes along the path. The rudiments of what once seemed an utterly new form or phase of doctrine are detected at a point farther back. Behind the most impressive inculcations of truth are

found the more or less unshapen materials out of which they were framed. The statue is followed back through the different sets of workmen to the quarry where the marble was hewn out of its bed. Before the Lord's Prayer was given by the Master, some of the petitions contained in it had lain dispersed, like grains of gold, in the arid waste of rabbinical teaching. The first effect on a novice in literary studies of looking behind Shakspeare's plays to the tales out of which they were woven, is to lessen in some slight degree his previous impression of the poet's originality. In a much greater degree is this effect produced by a first glance at the spoils of the past which Milton gathered — from Homer, the Greek tragedians, Dante — and incorporated into his poems. That revealed religion *is* revealed, and is not the product of human genius, despite the gradual unfolding of that religion and the coherence of its parts, becomes increasingly evident the more thoroughly its characteristics are appreciated. Its unique character finds no satisfactory explanation in the native tendencies of the Semitic race. History belies such a naturalistic solution, of which Renan is one of the later advocates. This can be said while it is conceded that there were, no doubt, qualities in the Hebrew people which caused them to be selected as the recipients of revelation, and as witnesses for God to the rest of mankind. When we contemplate the true religion in its long, continuous advance upwards to its culmination in the Gospel of Christ; when we survey this entire course

of history as a connected whole, — we are struck with the conviction of supernatural agency and authorship. When the outcome appears at the end in Jesus Christ and his work, light is thrown back on the divine ordering of the long series of antecedent steps. The accompaniment of miracle is a crowning token, reinforcing all other proofs of the supernatural, and confirming faith by an argument to the senses.

In glancing at the historic process of revelation, as that is disclosed by the scriptural documents, there is one transition which none can overlook. It is the contrast, on which the Apostle Paul builds so much, between law and gospel, the old covenant and the new. It is true that the Old Testament is not wanting in proclamations of the merciful character of God. The Apostle Paul himself insists that the Old Testament religion was, in its very foundation, a religion of promise, and that the law came in to fill an intermediate space and to do a subsidiary office, prior to the realization of the promise. His doctrine is, moreover, that even the Gospel contains a new disclosure of God's righteousness, which was made necessary by his having passed over human sins in the period of comparative ignorance. The atonement prevents the misconstruction which the divine forbearance in dealing with law-breakers in the earlier times might have occasioned. Still, the earlier revelation of God was predominantly a manifestation designed to impress on those to whom it was made his justice and unsparing abhorrence of transgression. Only as far as ill-desert

is felt can pardon be either given or received. An education of conscience must precede a dispensation of grace. The later revelation was one of forgiving love. The superiority of Christianity to the Old Testament religion is the subject of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Its author will show that Christ is the "mediator of a better covenant," — a covenant with "better promises." "For," he pointedly remarks, "if that first covenant had been faultless," there would have been no occasion and no room for the second. The world-embracing compass of God's love, its inclusion of the Gentile races, was one of the prime elements in the Gospel. This was the "mystery" which had been hidden from "ages and generations." The ordinary meaning of the term "mystery" in the New Testament writings is not something which is still unknown or inscrutable, but something which had before been concealed from human knowledge, but had now been brought to light. And the term is specially applied to the purpose of God to show mercy to the world of mankind, — a purpose which had been concealed from men, or at best but obscurely divined.

What precisely was the conception of God which was entertained in the earliest periods of Hebrew history, is a subject of debate. There are questions which will be settled variously, according to the different views which are adopted respecting the date and relative authority of the documents. That the process of expelling the vestiges of polytheism and image-worship from the practices of the Israelitish people was accom-

plished slowly, is sufficiently clear. The assumption, involved in language uttered by the heathen, that the gods of other nations than Israel are real beings and exercise power, although it may be less than the power of Israel's God, determines nothing as to the doctrine of Israel's own accredited teachers. But Jethro, although a Midianite prince, was the father-in-law of Moses, and we find him saying, "Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods." Jephthah says to a Moabite king: "Wilt thou not possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever the Lord our God hath dispossessed from before us, them will we possess." Even Solomon wavered in his beliefs on this subject. Side by side with the altars of Jehovah he built altars to foreign gods. Even in the early Church the idea prevailed that the deities of the heathen were demons, — really existing, but evil and inferior in power. It would be natural for the less-instructed Hebrews to imagine that there was some sort of territorial limit to the jurisdiction of the God whom they worshipped. An indistinct idea of this kind is at least a natural explanation of the story of the attempted flight of the prophet Jonah to Tarshish, which lay on the western border of the Mediterranean. There is a curious disclosure of a natural feeling in the fact recorded, without censure or comment of any sort, of Naaman, the Syrian captain. He craved permission to take into Syria two mules' burden of earth, — the sacred soil of Israel, — that upon it he might offer sacrifice to Jehovah. Some scholars

there are who consider the earliest belief of the descendants of Abraham to have fallen short of a positive monotheism, and to have been rather a monolatry, — the worship of one God to the exclusion of all other worship, but without an explicit disbelief in the existence of other divinities who have respectively their own earthly realms to govern. Then the progress of faith would include, first, the idea of the God of Israel as more powerful than all other deities; and then, later, the ascription to him of almightiness, and the distinct conviction that all other gods are fictitious beings. But the scriptural evidence in favor of this succession in the phases of faith is scanty. We are speaking now not of the populace, but of their more enlightened and steadfast guides. The path from a more narrow conception of God to a pure and absolute monotheism is supposed by some to have been through a deepening ethical idea of the attributes of Israel's God. Wellhausen writes: "Jehovah became the God of Justice and Right; as God of Justice and Right he came to be thought of as the highest, and at last as the only, power in heaven and earth." The reader of statements of this kind should bear in mind that we are in a field where prepossession and theory play a great part. If it could be established that Jehovah, at the outset, was regarded as simply the tribal god, the sovereign protector of that one people, while the other nations were imagined to have each its own guardian divinity, — still the expansion of this primitive notion into the pure and lofty conception of the

only true and living God, the world's creator and ruler, which is presented in soul-stirring language by the most ancient prophets, is a marvel. The transformation is really insoluble on any naturalistic theory. Even on the supposition that there was this gradual uplifting of religion from the low plane on which all pagan nations stood, and that the notion of a mere local divinity, of limited control, gave way to the majestic conception of one Lord of heaven and earth, the maker of all things, the ruler of nations, the universal sovereign, — no conclusion would be so reasonable as that God Almighty took this method of gradually disclosing his being and attributes to that portion of the human race from whom, as from a centre, the light of the true faith was eventually to radiate to the rest of mankind.

Neither the Hebrew people generally nor their leaders were metaphysicians. In the earlier ages especially, they entered into no analytic discrimination of matter and spirit. They pictured to themselves the varied activities of God, of whose personality they had the most vivid idea, in phrases descriptive of the feelings and actions of human beings. It is remarkable that the anthropomorphism of the scriptural writers is predominantly in what is related of Jehovah, the name of God in his relation to the chosen people, — the Deity (Elohim) as the God of Revelation. Yet from the beginning, all visible representations of God were forbidden as profane. In Exodus, as well as Deuteronomy, images of him are prohibited. "Ye

saw no manner of form on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb" (Deut. iv. 15). More and more, as time went on, the prophets guarded against all material associations attaching to the notion of the Supreme Being. A distinct step in this direction is to be observed in a passage of Isaiah, where it is said: "Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit" (Is. xxxi. 3). Yet it is not explicitly said in the Old Testament that God *is* a spirit. This was the declaration of Jesus to the woman of Samaria.

The universal Providence of God is a cardinal element in Christian theism. Nothing is independent of him. There is no province exempt from his control, where rival agencies hold sway and thwart his designs. We can easily understand why, in the early stages of revelation, all emphasis should be laid on the sovereign power of God, and why a clear separation of his direct efficiency from his permissive act should be reserved for a later day. It was always taught, indeed, and holds true for all time, that according to a law of habit, of which the Creator of the soul is the author and sustainer, sin engenders further sin. A self-propagating power inheres in transgression. In numberless examples it is observed that sin is thus the penalty of sin. It is true now, as it was always true, that a loss of moral discernment and a fixedness of perverse inclination are an ordained effect of persistent evil-doing. The law which entails this result is but another name for a divine operation. Hence it is

a false and superficial theology which will find no place for "judicial blindness" and for a "hardening of heart" that deserves to be called a judgment of God. So far the Scriptures of the New Testament are in full accord with the Scriptures of the Old. But there are certain forms of representation which, in the introductory periods of Revelation, go beyond these statements, and ascribe to God a positive and immediate agency in the production of moral evil. Sometimes the hardening of the heart is spoken of as if it were the end which is directly aimed at. Such passages, taken by themselves, would warrant the harshest doctrine of reprobation which hyper-Calvinism has ever broached. The proper treatment of such passages is not — certainly not in all cases — to pronounce them hyperboles. It is not through unnatural devices of interpretation that we are to rid ourselves of the difficulty which passages of this nature occasion. The reference of them to a fervid rhetoric — in some instances, to say the least — may not be the right solution. Why may we not see in them that vivid idea of God's limitless power and providence which has not yet arrived at the point, or felt the need, of qualifying the conception by theological discriminations? If it be asked how it was possible to reconcile the perception of the ill-desert of sin with the ascription of it to God's causal agency, the answer is that the inconsistency was not thought of. Reflection was required before the inconsistency referred to could attract attention, and the need of removing it

be felt. In more than one philosophical system — for example, in Stoicism — there is found an earnest ethical feeling, which condemns wrong action, side by side with a metaphysical theory as to the origin of moral evil which logically clashes with such an abhorrence of it. The two judgments do not jostle each other, because they are not brought together in the thoughts of those who entertain them. Where there is more reflection in the matter, as in Spinoza and his followers, it is still possible to keep up a degree of moral disapproval along with a theory which really ought to banish it as absurd. In the ancient Scriptures, and occasionally in the New Testament, especially in passages cited from the Old, the evil-doing and perdition of classes of men, their misunderstanding and perversion of the truth, are set forth as ends in themselves. Being involved in the circle of occurrences which are comprised in the general scheme of Providence, they are no surprise to him who carries it forward. They were foreseen and taken into the account from the beginning. It was arranged that they should be overruled and made the occasion of good. Their relation to Providence is emphasized in speaking of them as being directly aimed at and pursued on their own account, or for the sake of an ulterior benefit. As we follow down the progress of Revelation, we see that needful distinctions are more frequently made and more carefully insisted on. In the second book of Samuel (xxiv. 1) it is said that God "moved" David against Israel, with whom he was displeased,

and bade him go and number the people. The impulse or resolution of David, on account of which he was subsequently struck with compunction, is there said to have emanated directly from God himself. But in the later history (1 Chron. xxi. 1), in the record of the same transaction, we read that it was Satan who "provoked David to number Israel." The earlier writer does not hesitate to describe God's providential act as if it were the direct product of his preference, — an explicit injunction; and the fact of David's repentance for doing the act does not present to the writer's mind any difficulty. The chronicler, from a later point of view, sets forth the act of David in such a way as to exclude, if not to contradict, the supposition that it was God who prompted it.

The gradualness of the disclosure of the merciful character of God is one of the most obvious features of Revelation. One part of this disclosure pertains to the heathen, and to the light in which they are regarded. It was natural that the contempt and loathing which idolatry and the abominations of paganism excited in the heart of the pious Israelite — feelings which the Mosaic revelation developed and stimulated — should be felt towards heathen worshippers themselves. The hatred thus begotten might awaken an implacable desire that vengeance should fall upon them. An impressive rebuke of this unmerciful sentiment, and what is really a distinct advance in the inculcation of an opposite feeling, is found in the book of Jonah. There are reasons which have availed to

satisfy critics as learned and impartial as Bleek, who are influenced by no prejudice against miracles as such, that this remarkable book was originally meant to be an apologue, — an imaginative story, linked to the name of an historical person, a prophet of an earlier date, — and was composed in order to inculcate the lesson with which the narrative concludes. This was the opinion also of the late Dr. T. D. Woolsey. One thing brought out by the experience of Jonah is that so great is God's mercy that even an explicit threat of dire calamities may be left unfulfilled, in case there intervene repentance on the part of those against whom it was directed. The prophet, who was exasperated at the sparing of the Ninevites, was taught how narrow and cruel his ideas were, by the symbol of the gourd, " which came up in a night, and perished in a night." He was incensed on account of the withering of the gourd which had shielded his head from the sun. The Lord referred to Jonah's having had pity on the gourd, and said : " And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand ; and also much cattle ? " This humane utterance, in which pity is expressed even for dumb brutes, is memorable for being an important landmark in Scripture, since it marks a widened view of God's compassion. To illustrate this truth the narrative was written, and towards it as onward to a goal it steadily moves. It is a mistake to think that ill-will towards heathen

nations pervades the Old Testament. When they were full of animosity against the kingdom of God and determined to destroy it, anger burned fiercely against them, and prayers went up for their defeat and destruction. Very different was the feeling with which Cyrus and the Persians were regarded. We find that the conversion of the heathen nations becomes an object of devout aspiration. The sublime prayer of Solomon, at the dedication of the temple, for the "stranger" and "the peoples of the earth," is only one of the passages in which this feeling is poured out. In Micah, who was not the latest of the prophets, we find the prediction that unto the mountain of the Lord the heathen peoples will flow, will ask to be taught of his ways, and will promise to "walk in his paths" (Micah, iv. 1–4). An idea of the kingdom at once so comprehensive and so spiritual, was the fruit of time and progress.

The truth of a righteous moral government over the world pervades Revelation from the beginning. Obedience to law will not fail of its due reward; guilt will be punished in a just measure. But under the Old Testament system, nearly to its close, the theatre of reward and penalty was confined to this world. The horizon was practically bounded by the limits of the earthly life. It was here, on earth, that well-doing was to secure the appropriate blessing, and sin to encounter its meet retribution. The Israelite, like other men of antiquity, was wrapped up in the state. He felt that his weal or woe hinged on the fortunes

of the community in whose well-being his affections were, in a degree beyond our modern experience, absorbed. The prophets never ceased to thunder forth the proclamation that the fate of the community would be surely, in the providence of God, determined by its fidelity or its disloyalty to its moral and religious obligations. If they deserted God, he would forsake them. The people were to be rewarded or punished, blessed or cursed, as a body. And so in reality their experience proved. Moreover, as regards the single family and the individual, the tendencies of righteous action, under the laws of Providence, were then, as always, on the whole favorable to the upright in heart; The arrangements of Providence were in their favor. But in process of time it became more and more painfully evident that this rule was not without numerous exceptions. The righteous man was not uniformly prospered. He might be poor, he might be oppressed, he might be condemned to endure physical torture, he might perish in the midst of his days. On the other hand, the wicked man was often seen to thrive. His wealth increased. He grew in power and influence. His life was prolonged. How could the justice of God be defended? How could the allotments of Providence — this disharmony between character and earthly fortune — be vindicated? This problem became the more anxious and perplexing as the minds of men grew to be more observant and reflective. How to explain the lack of correspondence between the condition and the deserts of the individual? This problem

is the groundwork of the book of Job. A righteous man is overwhelmed by calamities one after another. His lot is to himself a dark and terrible mystery. But his consolers, when they break silence, solve it in the only way known to their theology. Such exceptional suffering implies an exceptional amount of guilt. Job must have been a flagrant transgressor. Of this fact his dismal situation is proof positive. The wrath of Jehovah is upon him. Conscious of the injustice of the allegation brought against him, yet unable to confute the logic of it, Job can do nothing but break out in loud complaints extorted by his anguish and the bewilderment into which he is thrown. He cannot see any equity in the lot which has befallen him. His outcries give vent to a pessimistic view of the world and of the divine management of it. Another interlocutor brings forward the inscrutable character of God's doings. What more vain and arrogant than for so weak and helpless a creature as man to pretend to sound the unfathomable counsels of the Almighty, or to sit in judgment on his ordinances? This, of course, is a rebuke, but contains no satisfactory answer to the questions which the distress of Job wrings from him. But the real answer is given. Afflictions may have other ends than to punish. They may be trials of the righteousness of a servant of God. They are a test to decide whether it springs out of a mercenary motive. Hence it is not to be inferred that his sufferings are the measure of his ill-desert. Thus a distinct advance is made in the theodicy. New vistas

are opened. Pain has other designs and uses besides the retributive function. Yet at the end Job's possessions and his earthly prosperity are restored to him. The feeling that even here on earth there must be, sooner or later, an equalizing of character and fortune, is not wholly given up.

It was revealed, then, to the religious mind that suffering, besides being inflicted as the wages of sin, might also be sent to put to the test the steadfastness of the sufferer's loyalty to God, to prove the unselfishness of piety (by showing that it might survive the loss of all personal advantages resulting from it), and to fortify the soul in its principle of obedience and trust. But relief from perplexity in view of the calamities of the righteous came from another source. This was the perception of the vicarious character of the righteous man's affliction. This idea emerges to view in a very distinct form in the great prophets. The pious portion of Israel, the kernel of the people, suffer not for their own sake, but on account of the sins of the nation, and as a means of saving it from deserved penalties and from utter destruction. This view is brought out by Isaiah in his description of the servant of Jehovah. The conception is gradually narrowed from Israel as a whole, or the select portion of Israel, and becomes more concrete; so that in the fifty-third chapter the sufferer is an individual, the Messianic deliverer. It is declared that the popular judgment respecting the sufferer, which attributes to him personal guilt, and sees in his lot the frown of

God, is mistaken. Penalties are laid on him, he is taking on himself penalties, which not he, but others, deserve to bear. How this principle of vicarious service is illustrated in the life and death of Jesus, and how abundantly it is set forth in the New Testament, it is needless to say. The men whose blood Pilate had mingled with their own sacrifices were not sinners above all the Galileans. The eighteen on whom the tower of Siloam fell were not offenders above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem. Who had sinned, the blind man or his parents, that he was born blind? His blindness, Jesus replied, was not a penalty for the sin of either. This problem of the distribution here on earth of suffering in discordance with desert, of which we are speaking, had new light shed upon it by the gradually developing faith in the future life; but of this point I will speak further on. In general, the contrast between the general tenor of Old Testament descriptions of the reward of the righteous, and of the New Testament declarations on the same theme, is very marked. In the Old Testament it is riches, numerous children, safety of person and of property, which are so often assured to the righteous. The words of Jesus are, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Yet the essential character of God, the eternal principle of justice that will somehow and somewhere be carried out in the government of the world, is at the root alike in both dispensations.

He who would appreciate the progress of Revelation has only need to compare the silence as to a hereafter

and the gloom that encompasses the grave — characteristic features of ancient Scripture — with the definite assurances and the triumphant hopes which are scattered over the pages of the New Testament. On this subject we can trace the advance from the night to the brightening dawn, and from the dawn to midday. The hopes and aspirations of the ancient Israelites were bounded by the limits of the present life. Their joys and sorrows were here; here, as we have seen, were their rewards and punishments. It is true they did not positively believe that their being was utterly extinguished at death. On the contrary, they found it impossible so to think. There was some kind of continuance of their being, vague and shadowy though it was. When it is said of the worthies of old that they died and were "gathered to their fathers," it is not to their burial — certainly not to their burial alone — that the phrase points. It was used of those who died far away from their kindred. A continued subsistence of some sort is implied in it. Necromancy was a practice which was forbidden by law; and the need of such a law proves that the belief and custom prohibited by it had taken root. The story of the appearance of Samuel, and the occupation of the witch of Endor, show at least a popular notion that the dead could be summoned back to life. Sheol, the Hades of the Israelites, was thought of as a dark, subterranean abode, a land of shades, where existence was almost too dim to be denominated life. There was nothing in this unsubstantial mode of being to

kindle hope, or to excite any other emotion than that of dread. In the poetical books Sheol is personified and depicted as full of greed, opening her mouth "without measure," and swallowing up all the pomp and glory of man. In a splendid passage of Isaiah, Sheol is represented as disturbed by the approach within her gloomy domain of the once mighty king of Babylon, and as stirring up the shades, the dead monarchs, to meet him. They exult over his downfall and death, crying, "Is this the man who made the earth to tremble, who made kingdoms to quake, who made the world as a wilderness, and broke down the cities thereof?" But this is only a highly figurative delineation of the humiliating fall and death of the arrogant, dreaded sovereign. It is not until we have passed beyond the earlier writings of the Old Testament that we meet, here and there, with cheerful and even confident expressions of hope in relation to the life beyond death. In the later Psalms there is an occasional utterance in this vein. The sense of the soul's communion with God is so uplifting as to forbid the idea that it can be broken by death. Jesus refers to the Old Testament declaration that God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as a sufficient warrant for the belief in the continued, immortal life of those who stood in this near, exalted relation to the Eternal One. What other — at least what higher — evidence of immortality is there than is derived from the worth of the soul; and what indication of its worth is to be compared with its capacity to enter

into living fellowship with God? How can a being who is admitted to this fellowship be left to perish, to exist no more?

Besides this connection of faith in a future life with the relation of the righteous and believing soul to God, the demand for another state of being to rectify inequalities here arose by degrees in religious minds. The strange allotment of good and evil, whereby the good man, and not the bad man, was often seen to be the sufferer, and the holy were found to be maligned and the victims of oppression, led to the expectation of a life beyond, where this confusion would be cleared up, and an adjustment be made according to merit. The moral argument, which Kant, and others before and since, have presented as the ground for believing in a future state, was a revelation from God to the Hebrew mind, and not the less so because this belief stood connected with experiences and perceptions that went before. There is a familiar passage in the book of Job in which the hope of a reawakening from death is perhaps expressed. It is the passage beginning, "I know that my Redeemer" — or Vindicator — "liveth." The confessions of hopelessness in earlier portions of the book, the impassioned assertions that there is nothing to be looked for beyond death, are to be counted in favor of the other interpretation, according to which Job expected that his vindication would occur prior to his actual dissolution. On the contrary, however, it is not improbable that the foresight of an actual reawakening to life is repre-

sented as having flashed upon his mind, displacing the former despondency. Certain it is that distinct assertions of a resurrection appear, here and there, in the later Scriptures. For in the biblical theology it is the deliverance of the whole man, body as well as soul, which in process of time comes to be the established belief. It is closely associated with the conviction that in the triumph and blessedness of the kingdom the departed saints are not to be deprived of a share. It was not a belief derived from the Persians, but was indigenous among the Hebrews, — an integral part of revelation, — however it may have been encouraged and stimulated by contact with Persian tenets. Not to refer to statements, relative to a resurrection, of a symbolical character, — such as the vision of dry bones in Ezekiel, — we find in the twenty-sixth chapter of Isaiah a passage which is explicit, and, as it would seem, to be taken literally. In the Revised Version the passage reads, "Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise." There is a critical question, it should be stated, as to the date of the chapter in which these words occur. In the Psalms there are not wholly wanting passages of a like purport. In the book of Daniel the resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked Israelites is very definitely predicted. As is well known, the resurrection was an accepted doctrine of orthodox Jews in the period following that covered by the canonical books. In the New Testament immortality, and with it the resurrection, stands in the foreground. Through

the death and resurrection of Jesus there comes a new illumination, a signal disclosure of God's purpose of grace and of the blessed import of eternal life; so that death is said to be "abolished," and life and incorruption "brought to light" (2 Tim. i. 10).

Other illustrations, within the sphere of religion as distinguished from ethics, of the gradual progress of Revelation, will occur to every student of the Bible. One of these we may find in the development of the idea of sacrifice. Among ancient peoples generally, the approach to a superior — a human lord — was by supplications and gifts. In the same way it was natural to approach the divinity, and come into immediate intercourse with him. As far as a special character belonged to Hebrew sacrifices, it was owing to the higher conceptions of God which pertained to the religion of Israel, and to the express ordinances and regulations under which all religious observances were placed. But the Old Testament sacrifices were gifts to God, varying in their specific import by the particular feelings to be expressed and the particular benefits to be sought. A surrender was made of something precious, signifying self-devotion to Jehovah on the part of him who brought the offering. When there was a rupture of relations by reason of sin, the sacrifice took on a modified significance, and peculiar experiences of feeling were evoked in connection with it. In the age of the prophets, the spiritual elements of religion are brought into the foreground, and in comparison with them, and in case

they are absent, the worthlessness of all ceremonial practices is loudly proclaimed. This elevated view comes out in the fifty-first Psalm, where God is said not to delight in sacrifice, but to crave as an offering "a broken and a contrite heart." The sacrifices of the ritual system might avail to take away the pain of self-reproach for a time, and with reference to particular transgressions. But the insufficiency of offerings of this nature became increasingly evident. At last the essential idea of sacrifice was realized and exhibited by him who could say of himself, "Lo, I am come to do thy will" (Heb. x. 9). Here was no outward gift, but himself — his own life — that was brought, in a willing surrender, to the Father. Here was the climax of self-denial, or devotion to the Father's will and appointment. The self-surrender of the Christian, even of his body, to God, the dedication of himself to God, is styled by the Apostle Paul our "reasonable," or spiritual, "service," in contrast with the external and visible sacrifices of the old ritual (Rom. xii. 1).

Another illustration still is presented in the Messianic idea, as that idea is gradually unfolded and by degrees transfigured in the Old Testament, and carried to perfection in the New. Messianic prophecy passes forward from its immature, germinant state in the earlier times, until it appears in the lofty and spiritual forms in which it blossoms out in later ages. The Old Testament community was itself prophetic. Everything in it pointed to the future. The very fact

that God had entered into a direct relation to this one people carried in it the promise of victory and universality. But what should be the characteristic features of the coming day, — this was a matter on which light must be shed gradually. Only as the community grew and advanced could it be taught to comprehend itself and forecast the future. A progress or growth of prophecy was therefore a necessary incident. Even inspired men could never be transported to a distant age. There were always limits in the prophetic anticipation, colors in the picture caught from the scenery and atmosphere in the midst of which the prophet lived and wrote. In the blessing of Jacob, in his saying that the sceptre should not depart from Judah; in those exultant prophecies of the dominion that would be gained by the kingdom of David and his successors, which we meet with in the Psalms; in the foresight, granted to the great prophets of Israel, of an approaching era of universal righteousness and peace; in Isaiah's portrait, in his fifty-fifth chapter, of the suffering servant of Jehovah, — we find different phases of Messianic prediction. In that chapter of the "evangelical prophet" the anticipation comes nearest to the ideal in certain essential features. But for the ideal purified from all imperfections of time and place and finite apprehension, we must look to the character of the Messiah himself, and to the work actually achieved by him.

When we leave theology for the domain of ethics,

the progressive character of Revelation is capable of abundant illustration. The Sermon on the Mount has for its theme that fulfilment of law, that unfolding of its inner aim and essence, which Christ declared to be one end of his mission. Morality is followed down to its roots in the inmost dispositions of the heart. The precepts of Jesus are a protest against the Pharisaical glosses which tradition had attached to Old Testament injunctions. It is "the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees" which is pointedly condemned. It is still an unsettled question, however, whether the reference to what had been said by or to "them of old time" was intended to include Old Testament legislation itself, as well as the perverse, arbitrary interpretations which had been attached to it by its theological expounders. Plainly the injunction of Jesus to love the enemy as well as the neighbor, goes beyond the directions in Leviticus (xix. 17, 18): "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart. . . . Thou shalt not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Here nothing is said of any except the "neighbor." The prohibition is limited to the treatment of national kinsmen. That the general obligation to the exercise of good-will towards wrong-doers and foes, wherever they may be, and to the cultivation of a forgiving temper towards all men, finds in the Gospel an unprecedented expansion and emphasis, is evident to all readers of the New Testament. A supplication for

the pardon of enemies forms a part of the Lord's Prayer. The hope of personal forgiveness is denied to those who are themselves unforgiving. The example of Jesus, and the pardon offered to the most unworthy through him, are a new and potent incentive to the exercise of a forgiving temper.

A glance at the ideals of ethical worth in the early ages of Israel is enough to show how sharply they contrast with the laws of Christ and the type of character required and exemplified in the New Testament. It was once said by an eminent divine that the patriarchs, were they living now, would be in the penitentiary. Polygamy and other practices, the rightfulness of which nobody then disputed, the wrongfulness of which nobody then discerned, are related of them, and related without any expression of disapproval. Whoever has not learned that practical morality, the ramifications of a righteous principle in conduct, is a gradual growth, and that even now, after the generic principles of duty have been set forth in the Gospel, and a luminous example of the spirit in which one should live has been afforded in the life of Jesus, the perception of the demands of morality advances from stage to stage of progress, is incompetent to take the seat of judgment upon men of remote ages. Not long ago a letter of Washington was published, in which directions are given for the transportation to the West Indies and sale there of a refractory negro who had given him trouble. The act was not at variance with the best morality of the

time. The letter is one that deserves to cast no shade on the spotless reputation of its author. Yet a like act, if done to-day, would excite almost universal reprobation. To revile the worthies of Old Testament times as if they lacked the vital principle of unselfish loyalty to God and to right, as they understood it, is not less irrational than to deride the habitations which they constructed, or the farming-tools which they used to till the ground. It is not the less imperatively required of us, however, to recognize the wide interval that separates the ancient conceptions of morality from those of the Gospel. Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, entered heart and soul into the cause of Israel in the mortal struggle with the Canaanites. In lending aid to the cause which she espoused she did an act of atrocious cruelty and treachery. She enticed Sisera into her tent, and when he was sleeping, drove a tent-pin through his head. Yet for her deed she is lauded in the song of Deborah the prophetess (Judges v.), "Blessed above women shall Jael be, the wife of Heber the Kenite!" Almost the same words were addressed to the Virgin Mary (Luke i. 42), "Blessed art thou among women!" What an infinite contrast between the two women to whom this lofty distinction is awarded! Nothing is better fitted to force on us the perception of the gradualness and the continuity of Revelation.

We meet in the Psalms with imprecations which are not consonant with the spirit of the Gospel;

they belong on a lower plane of ethical feeling. It is one thing to experience a satisfaction in the just punishment of crime. It is accordant with Christianity to regard with conscientious abhorrence iniquity, whether we ourselves or other men are the sufferers by it. Indifference to base conduct, be the root of this state of mind a dulness of the moral sense or false sentiment, is, to say the least, not less repulsive, and may be more demoralizing, than the fires of resentment which nothing but fierce retaliation can quench. But the spirit of revenge is unchristian. Christianity teaches us to distinguish between the offence and the offender: the one we are to hate; the other we are forbidden to hate. Moreover, Christianity never loses sight of the possibility of reformation in the case of wrong-doers. The Christian considers what an individual might be, not merely what he now is. The benevolent feeling, therefore, is not allowed to be paralyzed by the moral hatred which evil conduct naturally and properly evokes. As regards personal resentment, the Christian disciple is cautioned never to forget his own ill desert and need of pardon from God, and the great boon of forgiveness, in the reception of which the Christian life begins. These qualifications and correctives of passion were comparatively wanting in the earlier dispensation.

Many expressions of wrath in the Old Testament are directed against the enemies of God and of his kingdom, by whom Israel was attacked or threatened.

They are outbursts of a righteous indignation, and as such merit respect, even though an alloy of personal vindictiveness may unhappily mingle in them. It was no fault to be incensed against impious and cruel assailants of all that was precious to a patriot and to a reverent worshipper of Jehovah. It is impossible, however, to refer all the imprecations in the Psalms to a feeling of the authors in relation to such enemies of God and of his kingdom. No devices of interpretation can harmonize with the precepts of Christ such expressions as are found in the 109th Psalm: "Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let his children be vagabonds, and beg. . . . Let the extortioner catch all that he hath. . . . Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to have pity on his fatherless children." The wrath of the author of this lyric against the cruel and insolent one who "persecuted the poor and needy man, and the broken in heart, to slay them," it is fair to assume was merited. The sense of justice and the holy anger at the root of these anathemas are in themselves right. They are the result of a divine education. But they take the form of revenge, — a kind of wild justice, as Lord Bacon calls it. The identification of the family with its head is one of "the ruling ideas" of antiquity. It appears often in the methods of retribution which were in vogue in the Old Testament ages. It gave way partly and by degrees, under that progressive enlightenment from above through which

individual responsibility became more distinctly felt and acknowledged, both in judicial proceedings and in private life. The distinctive spirit of the Gospel is shown in the rebuke of Jesus when the Disciples proposed to call down fire from heaven to destroy the inimical Samaritans (Luke ix. 55). It is most impressively seen in his prayer on the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34).

It is the characteristic of Old Testament laws and precepts that in them bounds are set to evils, the attempt immediately to extirpate which would have proved abortive. Something more than this must be said. There was lacking a full perception of the moral ideal. In the Old Testament expositions of duty, as we have already seen, there is an approach towards that radical treatment of moral evils which signalizes the Christian system. An additional example of this feature of the preparatory stage of revelation may be found in the last chapter of the book of Proverbs. There "Lemuel," the name of a king, or a name applied to one of the kings, is apostrophized. He is exhorted to practise chastity and temperance. "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted." What better counsel could be given? The judge on the bench must have a clear head. But the counsellor, in order to strengthen his admonition, proceeds to say: "Give strong drink unto him that

is ready to perish." So far also, there is no exception to be taken to the wisdom of his precept. The Jews had a custom, resting on a humane motive, to administer a sustaining stimulant or a narcotic to those undergoing punishment, in order to alleviate their pains. Something of this kind was offered to Jesus on the cross. But the counsellor does not stop at this point. He says: "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more." There need be no hesitancy in saying that this last exhortation is about the worst advice that could possibly be given to a person in affliction, or dispirited by the loss of property. The thing to tell him, especially if he has an appetite for strong drink, is to avoid it as he would shun poison. Yet our remark amounts to nothing more than this, that the sacred author sets up a barrier against only a part of the mischief which is wrought by intemperance. His vision went thus far, but no farther. It is a case where, to quote a homely modern proverb, "Half a loaf is better than no bread." It would be a great gain for morality and for the well-being of society if magistrates could be made abstinent.

On this general subject there is no more explicit criticism of Old Testament law than is contained in the words of Jesus respecting divorce. The law of Moses permitted a husband to discard his wife, but curtailed his privilege by requiring him to furnish her

with a written statement which might serve as a means of protection for her. This statute, as far as the allowance to the man which was included in it is concerned, is declared by Christ to have been framed on account of "the hardness of heart" of the people. It fell below the requirement of immutable morality. It was a partial toleration of an abuse which it was then impracticable to seek to cut off altogether. But Christianity lifted the whole subject to a higher level. It presented a profounder view of the marriage relation. It superseded and annulled the Mosaic enactment.

The advance of the New Testament revelation in its relation to the Old has become, in these days, obvious. But the New Testament revelation, in itself considered, was not made in an instant as by a lightning-flash. It did not come into being in all its fulness in a moment, as the fabled Minerva sprung from the head of Jove. As in the case of the earlier revelation, the note of gradualness is attached to it. The fundamental fact of Christianity is the uniting of God to man in the person of Jesus Christ. Peter's confession respecting his person is the rock on which the Church was founded. The Epistle to the Hebrews opens with the following striking passage (as given in the Revised Version): "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son." The former revelations were made through various channels, and were

besides of a fragmentary character. They paved the way for the final revelation through the Son, whom the writer proceeds to liken, in his relation to God, to the effulgence of a luminous body. But modern exegesis and modern theological thought, while leaving untouched the divinity of Jesus, and even, for substance, the Nicene definitions of it, have brought into clear light that progressive development of the Saviour's person of which the incarnation was the starting-point. Not until his earthly career terminated and he was "glorified" was the union of God and man in his person in its effects consummated. More was involved in his being in the "form of a servant" than theology in former days conceived. Nothing is more clear from his own language respecting himself, as well as from what the Apostles say of him, than that there were limitations of his knowledge. On a certain day Jesus started from Bethany for Jerusalem. He was hungry. Seeing at a distance a fig-tree with leaves upon it, he went towards it, expecting to find fruit, — it being a tree of that kind which produces its fruit before putting out the leaves. But when he came to it his expectation was deceived; "he found nothing but leaves." Jesus said that he did not know when the day of judgment would come. Apart from conclusive testimonies of this character, it is evident from the whole tenor of the Gospel histories that he was not conscious of the power to exercise divine attributes in their fulness of activity. The opposite idea gives a mechanical character to his

actions and to most of his teachings. How, if he was all the while in the exercise of omniscience, could he "marvel" at the unbelief of certain of his hearers? That when he was a speechless babe in his mother's arms he was consciously possessed of infinite knowledge, is an impossible conception. And the difficulties of such a conception are only lessened in degree at any other subsequent day while he was "in the flesh." When we behold him at the last, prior to the crucifixion, we find his soul poured out in the agonizing supplication, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." The supposition of a dual personality in Christ is not less contrary to the Scriptures and to the creed of the Church than it is offensive to common-sense and to philosophy. Yet he was conscious of his divine nature and origin, and the unfolding within him of this unassailable conviction kept pace with the development of his human consciousness. The dawning sense of the unique relation in which he stood to God comes out in his boyhood, in the words addressed to his mother when he was found with the doctors in the temple, "Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" And the limitations of Jesus must not be exaggerated or made the premise of unwarranted inferences. He knew the boundaries of his province as a teacher, and never overstepped them. Just as he refused to be an arbiter in a contest about an inheritance, saying, "Who made me a judge or a divider over you?" so did he abstain from authoritative utterances on matters falling distinctly within

the sphere of human science. No honor is done to him, and no help afforded to the cause of Christianity, in attributing to him scholastic information which he did not claim for himself, and which there is no evidence that he possessed. It is not less important, however, to observe that, notwithstanding the limits that were set about him by the fact of his real humanity, and as long as he dwelt among men, there was yet an inlet into his consciousness from the fountain of all truth. "No one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him" (Matt. xi. 27). His knowledge differed in its source, in its kind and degree, from that of all other sons of men. "The words that I say unto you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in me doeth his works." The divine in him was not a temporary visitation, as when the Spirit dwelt for a brief time — sojourned, one may be permitted to say — in the soul of a prophet like Isaiah. Even then God spoke through the prophet, and the mind of the prophet might for the moment become so fully the organ of God that he spoke through the prophet's lips in the first person. But in Christ there was an "abiding" of the Father. The union was such that the whole mental and moral life of Jesus was an expression of God's mind and will. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." As conscience in me is the voice of another, yet is not distinct from my own being, so of Christ is it true that the Father was in him, — an-

other, yet not another. And this union, although real from the beginning, culminated in its effects not until a complete ethical oneness was attained, at the end of all temptation and suffering, — the oneness which found utterance in the words, "Howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt." This was the transition-point to the perfect development of his being, which is styled his "glorification." As the risen and ascended Christ, he can be touched with sympathy with the human infirmities of which he has had experience, at the same time that he can be present with his disciples wherever they are, — can be in the midst of the smallest group of them who are met for worship.

From Jesus himself we have a distinct assurance that the revelation which he was to make was not to end with his oral teaching. Near the end of his life he said to the Disciples, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." They were not ripe for the comprehension of important truth, which therefore he held in reserve. The Holy Spirit was to open their eyes to the perception of things which they were not yet qualified to appreciate. The communication of the Spirit ushered in a new epoch. Then the Apostles took a wider and deeper view of the purport of the Gospel. We find in the Epistles an unfolding of doctrine which we discover in the germ in the conversations and discourses of Jesus. It was impossible, for example, that the design of his death could be discerned prior to the event itself, and as long as the disciples could not be recon-

ciled even to the expectation of it. In isolated sayings of Jesus, in particular in what he said at the institution of the Lord's Supper, the atonement is taught. The giving of his life, he said on another occasion, was to avail, in some way, as a ransom. But it was not until the cross had been raised that the doctrine of the cross was made an essential part of Christian teaching, and the great sacrifice became a theme of doctrinal exposition. By this subsequent teaching a void which had been left in the instructions of the Master was filled. In his teaching there were two elements, standing, so to speak, apart from each other. On the one hand, he set forth the inexorable demands of righteous law. In this respect no portion of the older Scriptures, in which law was so prominent a theme, is equally adapted to strike the conscience with dismay. On the other hand, there was in the teaching of Jesus the most emphatic proclamation of God's compassion and forgiving love. These two sides of the Saviour's teaching are connected and harmonized in the apostolic exposition of the atonement.

The Apostles themselves, individually, as regards their perceptions of truth, their insight into the meaning of the Gospel and its bearings on human duty and destiny, did not remain stationary. How they attained to a more catholic view of the relation of the Gentiles to the Gospel and to the Church, must form the subject of a special discussion. Apart from this subject, where their progressive enlightenment is so

conspicuous a fact, there can be no doubt that from day to day they grew in knowledge. If we were in possession of earlier writings from the pen of the Apostle John, we might expect that marked differences would appear between them and the Gospel and the First Epistle, which were written when "the Son of Thunder" had ripened into the octogenarian apostle of love. The Apocalypse, so far as the style of thought is concerned, whatever judgment may be formed on other grounds, may quite conceivably have been written, two or three decades prior to the date of the Gospel, by the same author. When the earliest writings of Paul, the Epistles to the Thessalonians, are compared with his latest writings, — with the Pastoral Epistles and the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians, — we not only find perceptible modifications of tone, but in the later compositions we find also views on the scope of the Gospel — what may be termed the universal, or cosmical, relations of the work of redemption — such as do not appear in his first productions. As a minor peculiarity, it may be mentioned that when he wrote to the Thessalonians he seems to have expected to be alive when the Lord should come in his Second Advent; while in his latest Epistles this hope or expectation has passed out of his mind. As the Gospel and the First Epistle of John are the latest of the Apostolic writings, it is permissible to regard them as the fullest and ripest statement of the theologic import of the Gospel.

CHAPTER III.

THE DIFFERENTIATING OF CHRISTIANITY FROM JUDAISM.

How the ties which at the outset held Christianity and Christian believers within the pale of the Jewish religion, with no thought of breaking away from its appointed ordinances and rites, came to be completely dissolved, forms a highly interesting chapter in early Christian history. The leading agent, the man specially chosen of Providence to introduce this new stage of development, was a converted Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus. A remarkable characteristic of the revolution — or evolution, if one prefers so to call it — is the circumstance that there neither lurked in it nor ensued from it any antipathy to the Old Testament religion. It involved no discarding of the ancient Scriptures in which the revelation to the Jews was recorded. Moses and the prophets continued to be reverenced as divinely commissioned teachers. The Old Testament continued to be the Bible of the Christian churches. Up to the time of the composition and collection of the Apostolic writings they had no other Bible. It was read in their Sunday assemblies. The God whom Christians worshipped was the God of the patriarchs, the same who had "spoken unto the

fathers in the prophets." The religion of the Gospel assumed no antagonistic relation to the religion of the Old Testament. Yet it came to pass that the Old Testament ritual was dropped. The title of the Jews to peculiar and exclusive privileges in the community of Christian believers was set aside. The demand that the Christian believer should come into the Church through the door of Judaism, by conforming to the rites ordained for heathen proselytes, was no longer made. Christianity was, and was perceived to be, one thing, and Judaism another; and soon there was a wide gulf between them. At the beginning we find the Disciples continuing "steadfastly with one accord in the temple," although they met also by themselves for social worship (Acts ii. 46, Revised Version). If they were, in a sense, to borrow a phrase now current, "church-goers," they were likewise "temple-goers." They were like other Jews; only they believed that the Messiah had come, and although he had been rejected and crucified, they looked for his second appearing in power and splendor. The daily devotions, the solemn festivals, the smoking altars of the Jewish system were as dear and sacred to them as they had ever been. The converts were to be baptized, but baptism did not supersede the necessity of circumcision for admission into the Judaic-Christian fraternity. But pass over a few decades of years, and we discover that this conformity to the old system has vanished. Numerous Christian churches are planted in which the Mosaic ceremonies

are not practised. In process of time the revolution is complete. The synagogue is no more a place of resort for Christians. Their fellowship, such as it was, with disbelieving Jews, who formed the bulk of the Jewish people, is broken off. The rupture is absolute. The opposition is mutual. The Jews pursue the Christians with bitter maledictions. The Christians are of one mind in discerning that the old ritual with its burdensome yoke of ordinances is obsolete. They no longer tolerate the observances which at first they expected all of their number to practise.

This revolution was the consequence of no injunction of Jesus. He himself kept the law in its ceremonial as well as in its moral parts, notwithstanding that he protested against the over-rigid interpretations of the Pharisaic school. He distinguished between the laws themselves and the "traditions of the elders," — the glosses and additions which the doctors had affixed to the Old Testament legislation, under the pretext of expounding it or of applying it to unforeseen cases. He denounced the pernicious casuistry which brought in now an evasion of moral duties, and now an imposition of ceremonial performances which the spirit of the law did not exact. He taught that the value of institutions consisted in their usefulness. They were not an end in themselves, but a means for attaining a good beyond them. Rules were not framed for their own sake. Even the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. While Jesus encouraged no revolt against the ritual

system, while he even enjoined conformity to it according to its proper meaning, and himself set an example of such conformity, the spirit of his teaching and the work done by him undermined it. They could not fail to lead to the discontinuance of the Jewish cultus. Eventually it would be seen to have no longer a *raison d'être*. It would come to be felt to be as needless a burden as winter garments in the mild air of summer. The time must arrive when the Jewish system would be consciously outgrown. To keep it up would then be like the attempt of an adult to wear the clothes of a child. Jesus did not decree the subversion of the Jewish cultus, — that ancient fabric which had sheltered religious faith in the days of its immaturity, when the community of God was waiting for a full disclosure of his purpose of mercy and of deliverance for the race. He did not by one sudden stroke demolish that system, but he put gunpowder under it. And yet this is not an apposite simile. We should rather say that he prepared the way for the gradual, intelligent abandonment of it. There might be temporary confusion and even occasional contests; but on the whole the change was to be in a true sense natural, like the melting of the winter snows and the coming out of the leaves and blossoms under the increasing warmth of the vernal sun. Jesus taught that religion is spiritual. He showed, as the prophets before him had proclaimed, how empty is a round of observances into which the heart does not enter, and which are not accompanied

by righteousness of conduct. "Mercy is better than sacrifice." He said of one that he was not far from the kingdom of God because he discerned that the love of God and man "is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices." The illustrations in the Sermon on the Mount of that fulfilment of the law which he came to secure, all relate to moral tempers and moral conduct. He taught the infinite worth of the soul, the impartial benevolence of God, and that love is the substance of the law. His teaching was void of sympathy with Judaic exclusiveness. That the institutions of the Gospel could not be identical with those of the old system, he taught when, in answer to the question why his disciples did not fast, he said that "new wine must not be put into old bottles." He said that not what goeth into the mouth defileth a man. This he declared, the Evangelist adds, "making all meats clean." He laid down the principle that defilement is from the heart alone, from bad feelings and motives, — a principle which cut the ground from under the ritual as far as it related to meats and drinks. Jesus implied that he was conscious of an authority higher than that which prescribed the laws of the Old Testament, when he superseded the Mosaic precept concerning divorce (Matt. xix. 8, Mark x. 5); when he declared the Son of man to be "the Lord of the Sabbath" (Mark ii. 28, Luke vi. 5); when he affirmed that he and his Disciples were not under an obligation to pay the tax to the temple (Matt. xvii. 24–27). "In this place," he

said, "is one greater than the temple." The priests, it had been understood, were absolved from the strict observance of the sabbatical law. They might on any day offer their sacrifices; they might "profane the Sabbath" without guilt. The thought was not so remote that he who was greater than the temple might supersede the temple. To the woman of Samaria he said that worship was confined to no local sanctuary (John iv. 23, 24). There were predictions of a downfall of the temple, of the letting out of the vineyard to other husbandmen (Matt. xxiv. 2, Mark xiii. 2, Luke xxi. 6, John ii. 19, Matt. xxi. 41, Mark xii. 9). Then he made everything turn on the relation of men to himself. The test of character was belief or disbelief in him. The one condition and source of communion with God was personal communion with him whom God had sent. When this last truth should be fully apprehended, what space would be left for any other priesthood or sacrifice? At the Last Supper he so connected his death with the forgiveness of sins as virtually to dispense with the need of any other offering or intercession than his own. In fine, the large and spiritual view of the nature of religion which Christ presented, together with the sufficiency which he ascribed to his own work as a reconciler, made the cultus of the Hebrews, including the national rite of circumcision, superfluous. But how should the free and catholic spirit of the Gospel come to be recognized? How should the fetters of custom, and ingrained reverence, and national self-

esteem — the claim on the part of the Jews to precedence and to some kind of perpetual sway in the concerns of religion — be broken? For so great a change time was required. In matters where feeling is strongly enlisted, where lifelong prejudices are to be overcome, where usages are closely linked, from long association, with devotional sentiment, there is often between the premises and the legitimate conclusion a long road to travel.

The purport of the Gospel in the particulars to which I have referred was discerned by the Apostle Paul at an early date, and it was more clearly and vividly perceived by him than by any other. Whether Paul had in his hands written accounts of the teaching of Jesus, we are not informed. For what he says of the institution of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 23 *seq.*) he had in some way the direct authority of the Lord. He refers it to a direct revelation; for so we must interpret his language. On the contrary, what he says of the appearances of Jesus to the other Apostles after his resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 1 *seq.*) he had ascertained from them. We cannot be mistaken in supposing that Paul was acquainted with teachings of Christ which, in his judgment, contained an implicit warrant for that broad interpretation of the Gospel and of the privilege of the Gentiles under it which he adopted, — such teaching of Jesus as we have cited above from the Evangelists. In his intercourse with the other Apostles — it is important to remember that Paul spent a fortnight with Peter —

he had the best opportunity to rectify any mistake, if he had fallen into any mistake, in respect to this part of the Saviour's teaching.

It has been sometimes said that Paul himself professes not to be acquainted with the facts of the ministry of Jesus. This strange statement is founded on a misunderstanding of his meaning when he says that he did not receive the Gospel from men, but "through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. i. 12). This direct relation to Christ, who revealed himself to him and called him to be an apostle, does not preclude the obtaining of knowledge through secondary sources. That he did not care to learn what Christ had taught and done during his earthly life, is something quite incredible in a man of his active intelligence and Christian feeling.

That Paul became the leader in the work of emancipating the Church from Judaism has been sometimes attributed to the liberalizing influence of culture and learning. He was that one of the Apostles, we are reminded, whose mind had been expanded by study, and whose intellect had been invigorated and widened by a scholastic training. But on this subject of the education of the Apostle to the Gentiles there are prevalent mistakes which require to be corrected. One of them is the ascription to him of a familiarity with Greek classical writers. This idea is based partly on certain utterances of his which correspond to sayings of Greek authors. There are three of these passages. The first is in the Apostle's speech

at Athens: "As certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring" (Acts xvii. 28). The quotation is found in Aratus, a poet who belonged to Soli, a place near Tarsus, and it occurs also in that noblest example of devotional poetry that has come down to us from a heathen source, — the Hymn of Cleanthes. Both Aratus and Cleanthes belonged to the Stoic sect. The second passage of this kind is an iambic verse: "Evil company doth corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. xv. 33). This has been referred to Euripides by many, including John Milton, who remarks that "Paul thought it no defilement to insert into holy Scripture the sentences of three Greek poets, and one of them a tragedian." But the passage is traced by scholars at present to the "Thais" of Menander. The third of the passages traceable to heathen sources is the unflattering description given of the Cretans (Titus i. 12): "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons." The words form a hexameter, and are from Epimenides, a Cretan poet whom Plato styled a "divine man," and whom Paul does not scruple to call a "prophet," — recognizing in him, as regards this particular saying at least, a remarkable divination or foresight. But probably all these passages were proverbial sayings, and as such was caught up by the Apostle from the conversation of the day. According to the correct reading of the passage from Menander, Paul deviates from the metrical form, — which indicates that unless he did not know what the original was,

he preferred to give it in the shape in which it passed current as a proverb. There is really nothing either in the style of Paul's writings or in their contents to show that he was versed in the Greek classical authors. As to his style, it is unlettered Greek. It is not likely that a man of his high intellectual qualities could have read an author like Plato without distinct traces of the fact being evident both in his language and in his thoughts. On a mind of an inferior order a feeble impression might have been left by the masters of Greek philosophy, poetry, and eloquence, but not on a mind like that of Paul, in case he had been conversant with them. He was born, to be sure, in a city where Greek was familiarly spoken, — although the inscriptions discovered recently in that region do not indicate that the Greek in use there was of a choice character. Tarsus was a seat of Stoic philosophy. It must be remembered, however, that Paul was the son of a Pharisee, that he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and was no doubt brought up after the strict method of Pharisaic training. Such a father as he had would not have put pagan authors into his boy's hands. He had for his teacher at Jerusalem the rabbi Gamaliel. The advice which, according to Luke, was given by this noted rabbi to his fellow-members of the Sanhedrim reveals a certain moderation and sagacity. He dissuaded them from using force against the Apostles, for the reason that if their cause was right, it could not be put down, and the attempt to put it down

would be impious; while if their cause was wrong, it would come to nothing all the sooner for being let alone. His appeal to the instances of Theudas and Judas of Galilee, fanatics who raised a disturbance which lasted but a little while, would seem to indicate that he anticipated a like failure for the new enterprise which the Apostles were trying to promote. Whether Gamaliel was simply politic, or had some genuine tolerance in his temper, may be a question. This we know very well, that his ardent pupil did not share in any sentiment of this kind. He was an approving spectator of the killing of Stephen. He plunged into the work of a heresy-hunter and inquisitor. He seized on the Disciples of Jesus and shut them up in prison. He tried in the synagogues to force them to recant. He chased them from one place to another; for he was "exceedingly mad against them" (Acts xxvi. 11). It is certain, therefore, that Paul had not imbibed any lenient sentiment towards dissentients from the standards of orthodoxy; and it would be irrational to credit him with feelings of this kind towards the heathen. His education was rabbinical; and traces of its peculiar character crop out occasionally in his way of arguing and of illustrating truth, even after he had been lifted into the higher atmosphere of the apostolic calling.

Nevertheless, there exist in the writings of Paul striking coincidences with Stoic philosophic teaching. The correspondences between New Testament pas-

sages and Stoic maxims and precepts is a fact that calls for explanation. It is more marked in relation to Seneca, the Roman Stoic, the preceptor of Nero, than in regard to any other of the philosophers of the Porch. The similarity in his case extends to numerous sayings of Jesus as well as to other portions of the New Testament. The theory was broached by several of the ancient Fathers that Seneca was a Christian convert. There appeared a forged correspondence between him and the Apostle Paul. From the time of Jerome it was taken for granted that Seneca had been won over by the Apostle to the Christian faith. There is nothing to disprove the supposition that Seneca gathered up, perhaps from slaves of his household, fragments of the teaching of Christ and of Paul. Yet it has been observed that some of the most striking parallels are with the Epistle to the Hebrews, and this epistle was written after Seneca's death. The whole basis of Seneca's philosophical view is utterly at variance with the Christian system. This circumstance is fatal to the hypothesis that he was connected with Paul, as the legend represented.

But how shall we account for the Stoic phraseology which is undeniably found in Paul's speeches and writings? The Stoic ideal of the sage painted him as lacking nothing, as the possessor of all things, as alone free, as alone happy, as alone rich, as the true wise man, the true priest, the true king. In similar terms the Apostle delineates the Christian believer.

We seem to be hearing echoes of Stoic sayings. The Stoic system was cosmopolitan in its character. The kinship of mankind, that the Stoic is a citizen of the world, a denizen of all lands, are frequent affirmations of Seneca, of Epictetus, and of the imperial philosopher Marcus Aurelius. This universality of fellowship the Apostle affirms of the Christian believer. In it the boundaries of race and nationality are effaced. Such ideas in Paul are presented in an original, entirely different setting. There is a groundwork for them in Christ and his kingdom which was wanting to the Stoic, with whom these lofty distinctions could have but little more than a negative import and value. However, the verbal resemblance remains. This is best accounted for by the intercourse into which the Apostle was brought with Stoics both at Tarsus, where he dwelt for a considerable time after his conversion, and in other cities which he visited. At Athens, as we are told, he disputed with Stoics and Epicureans. These were the popular philosophical sects at that time. With the Epicurean tenets he could find few points of contact. But in the ethical ideas and maxims of the Stoics, although they rested on no basis of fundamental truth that was satisfactory, and although the Stoic ideal for this reason could not be realized, the Apostle discerned features which he, from his higher point of view, could appropriate. He could take them up and infuse into them both a significance and a worth which they had not before possessed. The relation of Paul to certain

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Stoic terms and phrases was somewhat like that of the Apostle John to the term Logos, or Word, and possibly to some other phrases in his writings. Terms in current use in the discussions of the day John could take up and transfigure, as it were, so that they became a fit vehicle for expressing the higher truth which was derived, not from any philosophical source, but from revelation and from the direct impression made by Jesus upon the susceptible spirit of his disciple.

The reason, certainly the main reason, for the exceptional liberality of Paul, for his complete emancipation from Judaic prejudice, is not to be found either in his learning or in his marked perspicacity. His mind was no doubt disciplined and made capable, above most others, of looking into a question to its very core. He had no need of an acquaintance with Aristotle in order to grasp a doctrine in its logical relations and to carry it out to the legitimate inferences. And he had a superiority in knowledge, — not merely in that sort of knowledge which an eager scholar of the rabbis would of course acquire. He had a store of knowledge, constantly increasing, drawn from observation and from contact with adherents of differing schools of opinion in the places where he sojourned. But the secret of his catholicity, as we have seen, is not to be found either in his talents or in his culture. To discover that secret we must turn to the history of his conversion. Great as the transformation was at that crisis, yet in important respects

he was the same man after as before. If we look at him first on the day when he was on the road to Damascus, armed with credentials from the high priest, and then look at him again when he was on one of his great missionary journeys, we behold the same energy, the same aggressive, conquering force. He was a crusader from first to last. No revolution of motive or of moral temper could be greater. He had become humane, loving, willing to give up his life, and even his own salvation, for the sake of the Jewish countrymen who detested him as an apostate. And the end in view — how different! Then he was bent on exterminating those whom now he regards with an almost motherly tenderness. Then it was to extirpate a faith which now he cherishes, and for which he is ready to be offered up! Nevertheless, the natural qualities of the man, the qualities that made him a leader and, when consecrated to the service of the Gospel, a Christian hero, were his in the first as well as the last of the eras into which his life was divided, and between which seemingly a great gulf was fixed. There is one other element of resemblance, or thread of continuity, of more consequence still. His ideal from the beginning to the end of his career was righteousness. To stand right before God, acquitted, with no accusation lying against him at the bar of the Judge and in the forum of conscience, was always to his mind the one inestimable good. He attached the same value to it after his conversion as before, the same before as after.

As to what is involved in being righteous, and how righteousness can be attained, these were points on which there was a world-wide difference between the earlier and the later conception. But the aim in its generic character was unaltered.

In the attempt to explain the conversion of Paul in such a way as to eliminate the miraculous elements in the event, a naturalistic solution has been suggested. The persecutor, it is said, was probably haunted with misgivings in reference to the course that he was pursuing. He had heard of the moral excellence of Jesus, perhaps he had seen him. He had been touched by the forgiving, heavenly spirit of the dying Stephen. The meek demeanor of the harassed Disciples was not without its influence. In short, there was a conflict arising in his mind; there was inward anxiety, amounting to self-reproach. Here, it is urged, was a state of feeling which might give rise to hallucination, — to the imaginary vision of Jesus. Augustine, sitting in tears under a fig-tree, overwhelmed with contrition, heard, or imagined that he heard, in a neighboring house a voice, as of a boy or girl, "chanting and oft repeating" the words, "Take up and read; take up and read." He took the Bible and opened at the passage, "Not in rioting and drunkenness," etc. (Rom. xiii. 13, 14). One trouble with the theory of hallucination in the case of Paul is, that not only is there no evidence that he felt any such disquiet as the theory presupposes, in regard to the rectitude of the errand on which he

was bent, but there is decisive evidence that he did not. The phrase "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" means nothing more or less than that he was engaged in a futile enterprise. It has no reference to any feeling of compunction. He was like an animal kicking against the goad, — that is to say, his undertaking against the Christian faith was a hopeless one. But he says: "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts xxvi. 9); "I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief" (1 Tim. i. 13). There was no insincerity, no inward halting, no doubt as to whether Jesus might not after all be the Messiah. There was no psychological state of the kind which would pave the way for an illusive vision of Jesus. If any are sceptical as to the accuracy of the Acts in this particular, or as to the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles, yet in Epistles, the genuineness of which is beyond dispute, the Apostle attributes his conversion exclusively to the grace of God and an act of revelation (Gal. i. 12, 16). "While," writes Weiss, "he constantly accuses himself of persecuting the Church, as being the greatest sin of his life, he never intimates that he struggled long against better knowledge and conscience, in opposition to the testimony of the truth." He never ascribes the revolution in his convictions, which was accomplished at a single stroke, to proofs appealing to his understanding, but always to facts accepted in faith, "on the believing acceptance of which his peace

of soul and his eternal salvation depend." Hence if it was a vision that produced the change, it was a real vision, and no product of illusion. It was a vision that convinced him not only that Christ continued to live, but that he had risen in bodily form; so that if this was an error, "it was God himself, by causing this vision, who led him into the error." This perception of Christ, while he was on the way to Damascus, stands apart from other visions, of which he did not care to speak. On it he rested as the guarantee of his apostolic office (1 Cor. ix. 1). There was included in it not only his commission to be an Apostle, but more specifically, to be an Apostle to the heathen.

The sight of Jesus in the glorified state swept away the "stumbling-block" which was contained in the idea of a crucified Messiah, and served to demonstrate the fact of his resurrection. But into the conversion of Paul there entered something more than the giving up of disbelief in the divine mission of Jesus. That, in itself considered, might not have carried with it any great spiritual change. In the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans the veil is drawn aside, and we have glimpses of the course of his inner life. Without doubt he speaks of his own personal experience, although he speaks as in this matter consciously the representative of human nature. He shows how the attempt to get inward peace by the method of law had collapsed. The seeking for righteousness on this path had brought him to utter despair, to a sense of helplessness. At the outset,

as we may suppose, in his younger days, he was "alive." His natural feelings and desires were in full activity, with no painful consciousness of wrong. But "the law came." There came a time when the holy ideal of duty to God and man rose before him in the rigor of its perfection. Then he "died." His peace of mind was gone. The conflict between the desires on the one side and the restraints of law on the other produced a schism in the soul. A distressing battle raged within, in which the better nature was felt to be powerless, felt to be a slave panting for liberty, but struggling in vain to free itself. To what extent this feeling of condemnation and of bondage was experienced by him when he was on the way to Damascus, — whether this consciousness of guilt and of weakness was not greatly intensified in the days that immediately followed, — he does not tell us, and we have no means of knowing. But this moral conflict it was that prepared him to welcome the gospel of deliverance. There was a better way to attain to righteousness; namely, a free pardon from God, and a new life in the spirit, — a heart-fellowship, a grateful feeling, a filial relation which made obedience easy. He learned by experience that a legal system had in it no life-giving power. It could only condemn. It could only make one aware of his need of help from some other quarter. When it had done this work, it had fulfilled its office, and was superseded by those forces of spiritual aid and healing which are contained in the gospel of grace.

Now what must be the effect of this experience on Paul's view of the Old Testament legal system, including the ceremonial features? He could look on that system only as something preparatory and provisional. It was like the ancient pedagogue, whose business it was to lead boys to school and leave them there. Law and grace, the old dispensation and the new, appeared to him in the sharpest contrast. In his philosophy of religion, ceremonial prescriptions, as means of salvation, were "beggarly elements;" that is, rudiments which had had their day. The other Apostles, the original disciples, had not passed through a like spiritual crisis. They had been led on, step by step, in the company of Jesus, into a full sympathy with him and trust in him as a Saviour. They knew that, believing in him and following him with a loyal spirit, they were forgiven and saved. In common with Paul, they held with one accord that reconciliation was through Christ, and that the humility of the publican in the parable was the temper of mind alone becoming a sinful man. The gradualness of their religious progress, the absence of a momentary, decisive turning-point, prevented them from seeing at once, and from seeing so distinctly, that relation of the new to the old, of gospel to law, which Paul's experience made as clear to him as sunlight. Their minds were open, they were ready to be guided by the Spirit, and they were thus guided; but so far as human instrumentality is concerned, it was Paul who led the way.

What effect on his mind had these new perceptions, the outcome of a living experience? They could have no other effect than to level the barriers of race and nationality. Where were now the privileges on which the Jew plumed himself? Sin was a characteristic equally of Jew and Gentile. The same divine law which through Moses and the prophets had been revealed to the Jew had been written on the heart of the Gentile. Both rested under the same condemnation. It was not on the Gentiles exclusively, it was on "the world," that the burden of guilt rested. And what could circumcision, lustrations, the sacrifice of animals, do to deliver any from the double yoke of self-accusation and evil habit? There was only one means of deliverance, one remedy for heathen and Hebrew alike. It was the Christ, and faith in him. Moreover, Paul had seen the Christ on a heavenly throne. His kingdom was evidently not a temporal one, having its seat in the city of David. Even when he should come again, the kingdom was not to have this earthly character. The Apostle no longer knew Christ "after the flesh," as belonging to one nation, and leading here among men a human life. He says, "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. iii. 20). There Christ is, and there, for this reason, is the centre of our polity. There is the seat of authority in the commonwealth in which we are citizens. When the Lord comes, the "body of our humiliation" — the mortal body, borne down by persecution, privation, suffering — is to be assimilated to his glorified body,

to that heavenly mode of being that belongs to him. Paul's conception of the kingdom is changed. His idea of it is wholly different from that of those who had not shaken off the associations of a political theocracy, with Jerusalem for its capital and with the temple on Mount Zion for the place of resort for all nations. When we consider the birth and education and earlier characteristics of this Pharisee, this inquisitor, thirsting for the blood of heretics, how astonishing is the declaration, "There is no distinction between Jew and Greek" (Rom. x. 12)! Few more remarkable utterances ever fell from human lips. Yet the reason which is connected with it explains all: "For the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him." There was but one Lord, and there was not less mercy in his heart for the heathen than for the Hebrew. In a religion that is spiritual, where there is but one Lord, and salvation is a free gift from him, there "cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman: but Christ is all, and in all."

We pause for a moment to point out a profoundly interesting parallel between Paul's conception of the death of Christ as bringing Jew and Gentile together, and certain most instructive and pathetic words of Jesus. At the last Passover, we read in John's Gospel, certain "Greeks," — who were not Jews, but heathen, probably proselytes of the gate, — who had come up to the festival to worship, came to Philip,

one of the twelve, and expressed their wish to see Jesus (John xii. 20, *seq.*). Philip reported this to Andrew, and then both carried the request to the Master. It is one of those circumstantial accounts which in its manner, not to speak of its contents, shows the truthfulness of the Gospel narrative. When the two Disciples delivered their message, Jesus exclaimed: "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." The visit of the Greeks, heathen, proselytes of the gate, and their request, was a suggestion to Jesus that the time had come for him to die, and thus to open the door for the wide extension and growth of his kingdom beyond the limits of Judaism. That very idea of the significance of his death is intimated which is clearly brought out by the Apostle Paul.

The first sign of a disposition to break through the wall that fenced off the Gentiles appears in the liberality of tone which was manifested by Stephen. It drew on him the charge of having threatened with destruction the whole Mosaic system of worship. His death dispersed the Church and sent abroad many to engage in missionary work. Philip, one of the deacons, preached with success in Samaria, and the Samaritan converts were recognized by the Apostles. The Samaritans, however, were among the circum-

cised; but the Ethiopian chamberlain, the eunuch, was only a proselyte of the gate, if he was even that. It required supernatural communications to Peter to induce him to receive the Roman centurion Cornelius and others with him, as disciples, and to sit at the same table with them. But Peter, when he returned to Jerusalem, was taken to task for his proceeding. When he told his tale, the accusers were quieted, and there was joy over this accession of Gentile believers. The illiberal spirit was quelled, but only for a time. It was not at Jerusalem, but at Antioch that the catholic interpretation of the Gospel first gained a foothold. There some of the dispersed disciples, Hellenists, or foreign Jewish converts, preached the new faith to the heathen. There in that great city, which was one of the three principal cities of the Roman Empire, Rome and Alexandria being the other two, the message of the Gospel met with a quick response in heathen souls that found in it satisfaction for their spiritual hunger. Barnabas, himself a foreign-born Jew, a native of Cyprus, was sent by the Jerusalem church to look after this new movement.

For a number of years after Paul's conversion he is almost lost to our knowledge. There was a sojourn in Arabia; and then, after the lapse of three years, a return to Damascus. From there he was soon obliged to flee. Then followed a visit to Jerusalem to see Peter, with whom he spent fourteen days. After this visit he went into "the regions of Syria and Cilicia." The churches in Judæa had not

met him, but had only heard that he who had been a violent enemy of their cause, had now become a preacher of the faith which he had persecuted. Later, he is found at Tarsus, and thence he is brought by Barnabas, who needed his help, to Antioch. They "taught much people" there, and there the disciples were first called "Christians." There is a coincidence between the ceasing to be a Jewish sect and the acquisition of the new name by which believers in Jesus were thenceforward to be designated. Up to this time they had been called "Nazarenes," "Galileans," or "Ebionites." Paul and Barnabas, according to Luke, were sent upon the occasion of a famine in Judæa with contributions to the Jewish Christians there; but as Paul makes no allusion to his being there on this errand, it is probable that by some accident he was hindered from accomplishing it.

So vigorous was the Antioch church that it sent missionaries into Asia Minor. On the return to Antioch of Paul and Barnabas from their missionary journey, they found the church in a ferment. Men from Judæa had arrived and had raised a disturbance by warning the disciples that they must conform to the Jewish law and be circumcised, or give up the hope of salvation. There was discussion and debate between Paul and his companion on one side, and the Judæan visitors on the other. Finally it was resolved that the two Antioch leaders should depart at the head of a deputation to confer with the Jerusalem church on this all-important subject of dispute. In

that church there had been an addition of members from the Pharisaic sect who were opposed to conceding liberty to the Gentile converts in this controverted matter. The rapid growth of the Antioch church, the multiplying of heathen converts, might naturally awaken anxiety and give rise to misgivings among many who had given way under the peculiar circumstances in the case of Cornelius. It was not now a question about a few individuals. Here was an organized church, on the basis of absolute freedom from "the law," and engaged in a successful work of propagandism. What was to become of the distinctive privilege of the Jew? Was the new kingdom to abolish the old cultus? Was it to be composed largely, and perhaps predominantly, of uncircumcised heathen? The turn of events brought up afresh a question of vital moment. Paul, on his side, had a full sense of the importance of the crisis. He resolved to meet it in the frankest and most direct manner. He would go to Jerusalem, and meet the Apostles and the church there face to face. He went up, he tells us, by "revelation," — by divine sanction; but he went, as Luke states, with the sanction of the Antioch church and as their commissioner. Fourteen years had elapsed since his visit to Peter; seventeen years had passed since his conversion.

We are brought to the memorable occurrences of which we have accounts in the fifteenth chapter of Acts and the second chapter of Galatians. At Jeru-

salem the demand was made of Paul that Titus, a Greek convert who accompanied him, should be circumcised. Here was a practical test that would decide the point in dispute. This demand the Apostle met with a resolute denial. That there was a pressure upon him which it was not an easy thing to withstand, is evident from his language. At that supreme moment he did not flinch. The intense agitation which the recollection of the crisis stirred within him is betrayed in his language; it causes him in referring to it, as Lightfoot remarks, to make shipwreck of grammar. We can well believe that his voice trembled as he dictated the passage to his amanuensis. Did the other Apostles join in this request, so repugnant to his views and feelings? We are not justified by anything that he says in inferring that they did. Still it would appear that Paul was left to stand alone, with no outspoken sympathy from any quarter. It is not improbable that even the Apostles at that moment, under the circumstances, recommended him to yield, and to make the required concession. But he felt that the principle was at stake. The very meaning of the Gospel, the breadth of its grace, the liberty of the Gentile, hung on a pivot. The Apostle took a stand like that which Luther took at Worms; but with a difference. But for Paul there would have been no Luther,—unless, indeed, it should have pleased God to raise up in the room of Paul another equally clear-sighted expositor of the truth and intrepid leader in the church. There was another dif-

ference. There were numerous friends at Worms to sympathize with Luther's position. Paul was alone.

Paul and Barnabas took the precaution to have a private conference with the leading persons in the Jerusalem church before they should meet its members as a body. Paul laid before the select company the substance of his preaching, the Gospel as he understood it, in order that his career as a missionary might not be interfered with by a division among the Apostles themselves, and an opposition to him, the fruit of misconception. The other Apostles were told not only what Paul and Barnabas had preached, but also the result of their preaching, — how that among the heathen Paul had been as successful as Peter had been among the Jews. No further persuasion was needful. Peter, James, and John had nothing to add to Paul's teaching by way of correction or amendment. On the contrary, they extended to the Antioch leaders the right hand of fellowship, with the understanding that their work was to be among the heathen, while their own work should continue to be among the circumcised. There was a cordial fellowship, as was implied in the engagement of Paul to collect alms from the Gentile converts for the poor disciples of the mother-church. The danger of a rupture was now over. It was settled that the heathen were not to be driven to become Jews in order to be Christians. But it remained for the Apostle of liberty to meet the Jerusalem church as a body. Our knowledge of this public gathering

we owe to Luke. At the meeting the recruits from the Pharisaic sect renewed their demand. Peter opposed it in a characteristic address, wherein he referred to what had occurred in relation to Cornelius. James spoke the final word, quoting, as he naturally would, passages from the prophets. He gave his voice in behalf of catholicity, but recommended that the heathen converts should be enjoined to abstain from certain practices which were especially obnoxious to men of Jewish birth, who had been trained to observe the laws of Moses and were to continue to do so. These articles of peace clashed with no principle which Paul valued. They included nothing that could fairly be called a modification of his teaching. They probably put in a definite form what was already a custom of the Gentile converts. They are based on the injunctions, imposed alike on Israelites and strangers among them, which are set forth in the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters of Leviticus, and included the usages which were practised by proselytes of the gate. The agreement of the Jerusalem conference, therefore, was not a compromise or concession to Jewish prejudices. It served to keep the peace among the disciples in Syria and Cilicia, to whom it was addressed. At a later day, when Gentile churches were independently established and in remoter places, the Apostle does not feel himself bound to refer to this pastoral letter of the Jerusalem conference. In writing to the Corinthians he considers the question of "meat offered to idols" on

its own merits, — just as he calls for gifts of money for the Jerusalem Christians without referring to the stipulation that he should make a collection for their benefit. Yet he teaches nothing at variance with the essential purport of the instructions given to the Gentile converts. We may be sure that James would have been content with nothing less than these "necessary things," and that Paul would not have consented to go farther in the path of concession. To the fact of their harmony and satisfaction with one another Paul himself testifies. That he did not go to the extreme attributed to him by Baur and his fellow-critics is clear enough from the Apostle's express recognition of the "gospel of the circumcision" as having been committed to Peter, and of the divine blessing which had been accorded to Peter in his work (Gal. ii. 8).

Ecclesiastical settlements were not then more certain to be final than in later times. It was understood on all hands that the Gentiles were to be left unmolested. But it was expected that Jewish Christians, whoever they were, should continue to conform to the old observances. To this Paul felt no objection. What he refused to do was to impose an obligation of this sort on the heathen; he would not allow it a place among the terms of salvation. If in the consultation of the Apostles at Jerusalem his own work had been approved by Peter, he in turn had approved Peter's work as the Apostle of "the circumcision." It was enough for him that the legal

observances were not made the foundation of the Disciples' hope in Christ. As regards outward things, he was no revolutionist. He let the Jewish national usages remain as they were; he willingly conformed to them himself. Not needlessly to offend Jews, he caused Timothy, whose mother was a Jew, to be circumcised. But still there were points which the Jerusalem conference left undetermined. So the controversy was reopened at Antioch in relation to one of these unsettled points. The Jewish and heathen converts there mingled together freely, and sat down at a common table. Peter, as well as Paul and Barnabas, had no scruples of conscience respecting this kind of free intercourse. But at length certain persons came from James. We are sure that they were persons of influence, for when they objected to this liberality on the part of Jewish Christians, not only Barnabas, but even Peter, deferred to them, and "drew back and separated" themselves. The rest of the Jewish Christians followed them. Here there was suddenly drawn a new line of division between the two classes of Christians. Once more Paul had to stand by himself. He sharply and publicly rebuked Peter for timidity and unfaithfulness to principle. He, a Jew, had been living as a Gentile himself, and now he was trying, so far as his example went, to bring the Gentiles to live as if they were Jews. The authors of this trouble came from James. It is not safe to conclude that they came expressly on this errand. Yet it may be that the liberal course

taken by Peter was the occasion of their mission. It is, on the whole, probable that their view of the subject was one in which James participated. He had given to Paul and Barnabas, in all sincerity, the right hand of fellowship. It does not follow that he expected the old restrictions as to eating with the Gentiles, and their social relations in general, to be swept away. It is likely that he did not interpret the Jerusalem arrangement in so broad a way as Paul construed it. A church made up as at Antioch, of Gentiles and Jews together, presented a case which in the conference had not been definitely considered. The tradition about James as it was given by Hegesippus, the Jewish Christian historian, in the middle of the second century, represents him as an ascetic, observing the Nazarite rule, strict in all his ways, frequently resorting alone to the temple, "praying for the forgiveness of the people until his knees grew hard and thin." We see him, on the occasion of Paul's last visit to Jerusalem, receiving the Apostle to the Gentiles with fraternal cordiality, to be sure, yet advising him to make a further manifestation of his respect for the ritual by taking on himself a vow, which involved the shaving of the head. The motive of James's counsel is thus explained in his own language: "That . . . all may know . . . that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law" (Acts xxi. 24). The occurrence shows how strenuous James was for the keeping up of the Mosaic ceremonies by the Jewish Christians, and how anxious

he was that Paul should do something to efface a prevailing impression that he had tried to induce Jews to discard them.

The spirit of James is clearly disclosed in the Epistle which bears his name. It was included in the ancient Syriac canon, and as it was addressed to Jewish Christians outside of Palestine, it was not improbably intended to be read primarily by Syrian disciples. The law, in the spiritual import given to it by Jesus, is prominent in the writer's esteem. We observe in the Epistle not a few echoes of the teaching of Christ. The practical tone, averse to all theory and theologic disputation, is obvious. Its doctrine is not contradictory to that of Paul, but moves in a different line. As Jesus had taught, it is said that men are to be judged by their works. There is a verbal contrast with sayings of Paul; for example, in the definite assertion that Abraham was justified by works. Whether or not we are to conclude that the author had in mind a current use and misuse of Pauline phraseology, depends on the date to which James's Epistle is to be assigned. Some would place it too early to admit of any reference to Pauline theology. There is much in the peculiarities of the Epistle — as in the application of the name "synagogue" to the meeting-place of Christians — to favor the supposition of a very early date. Could it be shown that it was written by James at a later point of time, the opinion that it refers to Pauline language would be more probable.

What was the immediate outcome of the renewed controversy at Antioch, the Apostle in his letter to the Galatians does not inform us. Taken up with his theme, — salvation by faith alone, — he drops the consideration of personal matters. About seven years after the apostolic conference at Jerusalem and the subsequent rebuke of Peter, we find Paul writing an epistle to the Christians at Rome. During this interval he had been pursued with animosity by the Judaizing faction, of whose malignity he repeatedly complains. Nowhere does he imply that the other Apostles are in sympathy with these enemies of himself and of the Gospel. On the contrary, his references to the other Apostles imply the opposite. Yet the reports which the Judaizers set afloat concerning him, to which a reference has just been made, might easily excite a certain degree of alarm and uneasiness even among the apostolic leaders who had extended to him the right hand of fellowship. We must bear in mind that the disturbance at Antioch had followed. Whether the separation of Paul from Barnabas, the immediate occasion of which had reference to Mark, had any connection with that incident, we are not informed. At all events, when Paul writes to the Romans, he is looking forward to another visit to Jerusalem, not without some anxiety about the reception that will be accorded to him. He asks for the prayers of the Roman brethren not only that he may be delivered from the hostility of the unbelieving Jews in that city, but also that his "ministration"

might be acceptable to the "saints" there. There was some apprehension in his mind lest the collection which he had been making for the poor in the Jerusalem church might be unwelcome (Rom. xv. 31), gathered as it was from churches composed of heathen converts, and while the accusation of being hostile to the observance of the Mosaic rites by anybody was circulated against him. His kind and fraternal reception by James and his associates dispelled this apprehension. The mob of Jews that assailed him, notwithstanding the precautions taken to appease their wrath, showed the hatred which had been accumulating against him in the course of the missionary campaigns in which he had spent the later eventful years.

The Apostle now passed into the custody of Roman officers. At the end of about two years he was conveyed to Rome. After the lapse of another equal interval, he appears to have been set free for a time. Once more a captive, it was in the closing part of Nero's reign, the period of the tyrant's unbridled cruelty, and in the year 66 or 67, that he fell under the sword of the executioner. If the name of James is not an interpolation in a passage of Josephus, James perished in the interval between the death of the procurator Festus and the arrival of his successor, or in the year 62. As to the main fact that James was stoned to death, the traditions agree. It is evident that the animosity of the Jews even against the most conservative — if the term may be allowed — of

the followers of Jesus was growing fierce. The lines between the adherents of orthodox Judaism and the believers in the Nazarene were more and more sharply drawn. At length, in the year 66, the great insurrection against Rome burst out. In the blaze of the popular fanaticism there was no safety for Christians within the walls of Jerusalem. The church there was broken up. When the epoch of the mortal struggle of Judaism with Roman power was fast approaching, the Jewish Christians must necessarily find that the middle position which, in a certain sense, they had held, was no longer tenable. There were circumstances which might tempt them to give up their faith in Jesus, and to find their comfort exclusively in the old system in which they had been bred, and whose ceremonies they still observed. They had hoped for the conversion of their countrymen, but that hope grew more and more faint. They had hoped for the reappearance of the ascended Messiah, but where was the promise of his coming? Patriotic instincts might naturally awake to a new life, and sympathy with the national enthusiasm, impelling to a revolt against foreign domination, might find a lodgment even in Christian hearts. There stands in the canon an Epistle to the Hebrews, concerning the authorship of which opinion has been divided from ancient times. At the present day there are few scholars who attribute it to Paul. Some, with Luther, ascribe it to Apollos; others to Luke, or to Barnabas. Whoever the writer was, it is certain that it was addressed to

Jewish Christians. The purpose of the author, moreover, is clear. He sees a danger and he is striving to ward it off. He seeks to deter Jewish believers from lapsing from their faith and returning to Judaism. He is anxious to show them that they have in the Gospel a treasure infinitely more precious than anything offered them in the old ritual, and that the ordinances and ceremonies of the ancient covenant are but types of blessed and enduring realities brought to them through Christ. To go back to the old sacrificial system is to give up the substance for the shadow.

If there was a retrograde movement, a reactionary tendency in some minds at this critical era, when the fate of the Jewish state and the Jewish religion hung in the balance, the same circumstances would engender in another class an opposite feeling. They would cling to the Christian faith with redoubled ardor and firmness. The tie that still held them to the old ceremonies would be loosened. The rejection of the Messiah by the Jewish people, and the persistent rejection of him, with the attendant fact of the astonishing spread of the new faith among the Gentiles, must have tended to open the eyes of many to a more just and liberal interpretation of the purpose of God. A fatal blow was dealt at Jewish Christianity by Divine Providence, — the same Providence which had been the teacher from the beginning, removing, step by step, prejudice and misconception. No doubt there were those with whom the legions of Titus were more

effective than persuasion and argument. The "logic of events" could not be disputed. Many Jewish Christians must have seen in the ruins of the Temple a sign of the passing away of the ancient system of worship. When the Jewish rites were wholly forbidden in Jerusalem, and it was converted by Hadrian into a heathen city (A. D. 135), the lesson was taught afresh with an irresistible emphasis.

It was probably about the time of the beginning of the Jewish war, and after the death of the Apostle Paul, that there was a migration of a number of Jewish Christians to Asia Minor. Among them were the two Apostles Andrew and Philip, and among them also was the Apostle John. John took up his abode at Ephesus. Traditions of his life and teaching and traces of his influence remained in all that region. There, in his serene old age, he wrote his Gospel and Epistles. From one of his pupils, the martyr Polycarp, Irenæus in his youth heard personal reminiscences of the Beloved Disciple. It is the same Apostle who, long before, had given to the Apostle to the Gentiles "the right hand of fellowship." After all these years, after the providential occurrences which had swept away the hope of the conversion of the Jews as a body, it would be strange indeed if no further advance had been made in catholicity of perception. The sayings of Jesus, which indicate the spiritual and universal nature of the Gospel, are present in John's recollection. He remembered that Jesus had said that the worship of the Father was not

to be confined to Mount Gerizim or to Jerusalem. Christianity was now set free from Judaism, and in the second century Judaic Christianity survived only in sects beyond the borders of the church.

To revert for a moment to the causes which brought on this result, the historical events to which reference has been made have an important place. The subjugation of the Jews by Hadrian, and the exclusion of their worship from the Holy City, were of especial consequence. An essential condition, on which the result depended, was the multiplying of churches made up of Gentile converts. The rapid spread of the Gospel in the Gentile world, and the comparative fewness of its Jewish adherents, excited surprise even in the lifetime of Paul. It was to him a mysterious fact, a fact that called for explanation. His heart is wrung when he thinks of the situation in which his "kinsmen according to the flesh" are left. That they should not be included within the fold of the Messiah! Through the ninth, the tenth, and the eleventh chapters of the Epistle to the Romans he wrestles with the problem. He rests in no single solution, but passes from one to another. The blessing of God has never been bestowed strictly according to the law of heredity; God's sovereign will has decided on whom it should descend; it is impious to call in question his right to determine the lot of his creatures. Then there is always a remnant of Israelites who are not cut off from the blessing. Moreover, if the rest lose it, the fault is theirs;

they do not seek it by faith. Finally, their rejection is only temporary; when the Gentiles have flowed in, their emulation will be kindled, their turn will come; "and so all Israel shall be saved." Thus in these fervid passages, passing from one suggestion to another, the Apostle pours out his soul, rent with anguish by the spectacle of the people of Israel, whose are the promises, turning their back on the Christ. Theologians have too often erred in losing sight of the historical situation which so deeply moved the Apostle, and in fixing their attention on only a fraction of his utterances. But the point which concerns us here is the effect of the influx of the Gentiles, and of the comparatively small accession of Jewish converts, in determining the character of the Church and in moulding its institution. The catholic character of early Christianity was in no small measure the result of these circumstances. But underlying all other agencies was the leavening influence of the teaching of Jesus. The catholic elements of that teaching produced their legitimate effect. They were the warrant for the doctrine of the Apostle Paul. They leavened the spirit of the Apostle John. It was Jesus and the teaching of Jesus that liberated Christianity from the entanglements of Judaism.

CHAPTER IV.

REVELATION AND FAITH.

THE term "Revelation" is commonly used to denote religious truth supernaturally communicated, as distinguished from the knowledge of God obtained by natural means. In this use of terms, revealed religion stands in contrast with natural religion. But all our knowledge of God, through whatever medium derived, is from one ultimate source. That source is a revelation, or disclosure, which God makes of himself. And all truth respecting things divine and supernatural is apprehended by faith. Faith is the word descriptive of the mind's reception of it. Hence, in speaking of faith, and illustrating its nature, we may fitly take into view the fundamental truths of natural theology as well as Christianity.

It is often said, and the same thing is more often insinuated, that faith is something independent of evidence. It is looked upon as belief for which no reasons — that is to say, no valid reasons — are to be assigned. The individual himself, such is the implication, may perhaps be fully persuaded, but nothing that he can say constitutes an adequate ground of conviction for other minds than his own.

One occasion of this impression is the failure to distinguish between the sources and the proofs of religion. The genesis of religion as a fact of experience is one thing; the proofs of its reasonableness and the vindication of faith against scepticism are another. The genesis of religion is primarily from within, and not from without. As Aristotle styled man a political animal, it may be affirmed with even more emphasis that man is a religious being. Religion is not something foreign to his nature, imported into it from the external world, inculcated as a piece of information by his elders; nor is it, in its origin, an inference from the marks of design stamped upon things about him. The roots of religion are not in any process of the understanding. The idea that religious faith is a delusion of the imagination, a superstition engendered by dreams or by the fancied sight of ghosts of the dead, is disproved by history and philosophy. Religion is too deeply embedded in human nature, it is too powerful a factor in the history of mankind, to be accounted for by any of these superficial conjectures. Faith in the Being above us, the Author of our being, springs out of the sense of dependence and the feeling of obligation and of law, — law felt as the manifested will of another, even the infinite Spirit in whom we live, — and it is born of that yearning for a higher fellowship with him which alone can fill the soul with peace and joy. This primal revelation of God in the soul is the fountain-head of religion. However vague this impression

may be in the beginning, however obscure the perception, and however dim it is rendered by the absorbing quest for earthly pleasure, it is the light of all our seeing. There is a *nisus* in the souls of men, — a tendency "to seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him." This implied recognition of the existence of God is that from which — as John Calvin, in unison with the most profound philosophers of all ages, expresses it — "the propensity to religion proceeds." Here is the germ of our distinct and defined religious convictions. The latent anticipations of our nature are met and matched by the manifestation of God in the material world, in history, or the providential succession of events, and in Christ. These manifestations constitute the objective proofs of religion. They are real proofs. Drawn out into explicit statements, they constitute the arguments for Christian theism. It is true that no constraining efficacy belongs to them. But the same is to be said of all reasoning that is not strictly demonstrative. No other interpretation of the phenomena is so satisfactory to the unbiassed reason of thoughtful inquirers. At the same time, another interpretation of the phenomena is always *possible*. Here it is that the primal disclosure of God in consciousness, the native "propensity to religion," when it is not dulled or stifled, avails to banish doubt. Let it be noticed, also, that this very religious constitution, by which we are inwardly drawn to God, correlated as it is to objective manifestations, constitutes an argument for the verity to which it points.

The great church historian Neander, whose living experience of religion opened to his mind its true philosophy, has these noble words respecting Socrates: "Socrates stands at the head of those men of supreme distinction in the world's history who, in the times when faith in anything divine and in objective truth has been shaken and shattered by the sophistry of an understanding that disintegrates all things, and the power of an all-embracing spirit of denial, have led men back into the depths of their soul, which is akin to God, and have caused them to find in the immediate consciousness of the true and the divine an assurance lifted above all doubts. From the speculative questions, in answering which the spirit ever anew tires itself out, he turned their glance within upon their own moral nature. From the external world he called the spirit back to its own inner being, that it might there find its whereabout and learn to be at home. It is the weighty 'know thyself' which the oracle at Delphi praised as the characteristic merit of Socrates. The great impulse that went forth from him worked on for centuries, and in later times was continually renewed by the agency of men who carried down his spirit to after ages; and this influence it was which directed attention to that in man which is immediately related to God and to the moral element in the human soul, as well as from this, as the starting-point, to the religious." What sceptical minds need in this age, as in every other, is to remember that man has a soul as well as an

understanding. Conscience, sensibility, affection, aspiration are a deep and indestructible part of human nature. As there is a soul, there is a life of the soul. There are presages and inchoate beliefs native to human beings, existing by their own right, entitled to respect, needing, it may be, light and direction, but too sacred to be ignored. To surrender them is to fling away that which is most precious in man. In the depths of the spirit religion has its birth. It is a flame kindled in the soul by its Divine Author.

Keeping in mind that the grounds of faith are in the connection of the subjective and objective manifestations of God, each throwing light upon the other and each serving to corroborate the other, we may glance at certain leading proofs of theism which thus address us from without.

Nature is pervaded by an intellectual element. That nature is intelligible, is the prime assumption in all study of natural phenomena. As Professor Huxley truly remarks, at the beginning of a recent essay on the progress of science in the last half century, the object of science "is the discovery of the rational order which pervades the universe." This affinity of nature with our own minds, this mind in nature, implies an intelligent Author of nature. It is *possible* to conclude otherwise, but not reasonable or natural.

Materialistic atheism must begin with the impossible task of resolving the human mind into a machine, and identifying consciousness and thought with the

molecular movements of the brain. It must build a bridge which can never be built. The doctrine of the conservation of energy affords no help in this direction. Clerk Maxwell, one of its most authoritative expounders, says: "There is action and reaction between body and soul, but it is not of a kind in which energy passes from one to the other, — as when a man pulls a trigger, it is the gunpowder that projects the bullet, or when a pointsman shunts a train, it is the rails that bear the thrust. . . . The conservation of energy, when applied to living beings, leads to the conclusion that the soul of an animal is not, like the mainspring of a watch, the motive power of the body, but that its function is rather that of a steersman of a vessel, — not to produce, but to regulate and direct, the animal powers."

No modern discoveries have weakened the force of the argument of design, which in all ages has impressed alike the philosopher and the peasant. Evolution is a method, not a cause. It does nothing to account for the origin of things or the energy exerted in all progressive development. "It is plain," says Mr. Sully, "that every doctrine of evolution must assume some definite initial arrangement, which is supposed to contain the possibilities of the order which we find to be evolved, and no other possibility." Until that initial arrangement, involving all that issues out of it, is accounted for, not a step is taken towards explaining the world. The outcome of all the past history of Nature is undeniably an

orderly system, — a cosmos. To introduce an element of "chance" in the succession of steps leading to it is a philosophical absurdity. Such a meaningless notion might seem to be countenanced in the terms used to describe the promiscuous variation which was a part of Mr. Darwin's theory. But even Mr. Darwin had no thought of denying that there are *laws* of variability. "Our ignorance," he says, "of the laws of variation is profound." This of course implies that there are such laws. The constitution of the being that varies is an essential factor, and with Mr. Darwin the prime factor, in producing the variations which constitute the materials on which the so-called selective agency of nature acts. But according to many evolutionists, like Asa Gray, variation moves along definite lines, and its range is limited. If this were not the fact, as the physiologist Dr. W. B. Carpenter cogently argues, the chances to be overcome in building up an organized species are infinite. "On the hypothesis of 'natural selection' among aimless variations," says Dr. Carpenter, "I think that it could be shown that the probability is infinitely small that the progressive modifications required in the structure of each individual organ to convert a reptile into a bird could have taken place without disturbing the required harmony in their combined action; nothing but intentional variations being competent to bring such a result." The proof of this pre-arrangement is furnished "by the orderly sequence of variations fol-

lowing definite lines of advance. The evidence of final causes is not impaired. 'We simply,' to use the language of Whewell, 'transfer the notion of design and end from the region of facts to that of laws;' that is, from the particular cases to the general plan. In this general plan the production of man is comprehended. In him, the final product, the meaning and aim of the entire scheme of creation are fully discovered."

There are naturalists, among them Mr. Wallace, who are in more full accord with Darwin's particular view, and ascribe more to "natural selection." Generally speaking, even these are not so rash as to undertake to rule out teleology, and to explain the phenomena of vegetable and animal life on a mechanical theory which excludes design. How inadequate the mechanical view is, regarded as an explanation of nature, has been demonstrated by Lotze and other philosophers, who are not in the least averse to the doctrine of a genetic relation of animal species to one another, or even to a wider extension of evolutionary theory. It is easy for naturalists to become absorbed in the search after the links of causal connection which bind together the phenomena of nature. There is an extreme, the antipode of that false use of the idea of final causes which stifled inductive investigation and against which Bacon protested. But even to naturalists of the present day, who are chargeable with this error, the teleological aspect of nature, the design that runs through all, will at times come home

with an irresistible force of impression. Darwin is himself an example. The Duke of Argyll, speaking of the phenomena of nature, which "our mind recognizes as mental," writes as follows: —

"I have the best reason to know that Darwin himself was very far from being insensible to the evidence of this truth. In the year preceding his death he did me the honor to call upon me in London; and in the course of our conversation I said to him that to me it seemed wholly impossible to separate many of the adjustments which he had so laboriously traced and described, to any other agency than that of mind. His reply was one which has left an ineffaceable impression upon me, not from its words only, but from the tone and manner in which it was given. 'Well,' he said, 'that impression has often come upon me with overpowering force. But then, at other times, it all seems — ;' and then he passed his hands across his eyes, as if to indicate the passing of a vision out of sight."

The admission of a First Cause — that is, of a Cause which is not itself an effect — is unavoidable, unless the principle of causation is to be utterly discredited. The Agnostic theory of an "Unknowable" is self-destructive. To ascribe to the Infinite Being *power*, is open to whatever objection is imagined to lie against the ascription to that Being of *intelligence*. It is assumed that there is a revelation of *power:* because of this revelation the existence of that being is assumed. But the revelation of *intelligence* is every whit as clear.

How shall we be assured of the moral attributes

of God, of his holiness and love? We are in a world that abounds in suffering. How shall this be reconciled with benevolence in the Creator? Much weight is to be given to the consideration of the effects flowing of necessity from a system of general laws, notwithstanding the advantages of such a system. The suggestions relative to the occasions and beneficent offices of pain and death, which are presented by such writers as James Martineau, in his recent work, "A Study of Religion," are helpful. Especially is the fact of moral evil to be taken into the account when a solution is sought for the problem of physical evil, its concomitant and so often its consequence. Let it be freely granted, however, that no explanations that man can devise avail to clear up altogether the mystery of evil. It is only a small part of the system of things that falls under our observation in the present stage of our being. It is not by an inductive argument, by showing a preponderance of good over evil in the arrangements of nature, that the mind is set at rest. There is no need of an argument of this kind. There is need of faith, but that faith is rational. We find in our own moral constitution a direct and full attestation of the goodness of God. Our moral constitution is affirmed, by a class of evolutionists, to be a gradual growth from a foundation of animal instincts. Let this speculation go for what it may be worth. The same theory is advanced respecting the human intellect. Yet the intellect is assumed to be an organ of knowledge. There is no

avoiding this conclusion, else all science, evolutionary science included, is a castle in the air. If the intellect is entitled to trust, so equally is the moral nature. Are the righteousness and goodness of God called in question on the ground of perplexing facts observed in the structure and course of the world? Where do we get the qualifications for raising such inquiries or rendering an answer to them? It must be from ideals of character which we find within ourselves, and from the supreme place accorded to the moral law which is written on the heart. But whence come these moral ideals? Who enthroned the law of righteousness in the heart? Who inscribed on the tablets of the soul the assertion of the inviolable authority of right and the absolute worth of love as a motive of action? In a word, our moral constitution is itself given us of God, and if it be not the reflection of his character, it is, for aught we can say, a false light; in which case all the verdicts resting upon it, with all the queries of scepticism as to the goodness of God, may be illusive. The arraignment of the character of God on the ground of alleged imperfections in nature or of seemingly harsh and unjust occurrences in the course of events, is therefore suicidal. The revelation of God's character is in our moral constitution. The voice within us, which is uttered in the sacred impulse of duty and in the law of love, is his voice. There we learn what he approves, what he requires, what he rewards. When this proposition is denied, we lose our footing; we

cut away the ground for trust in our own capacity for moral criticism.

Man has not one originating cause, and the world another. The existence and supreme authority of conscience imply that in the on-going of the world righteousness holds sway. If there is a moral purpose underlying the course of things, then a righteous Being is at the helm. What confusion worse than chaos in the idea that while man himself is bound to be actuated by a moral purpose, the universe in which he is to act his part exists for no moral end, and that through the course of things no moral purpose runs!

Even Kant, who bases our conviction as to the fundamental truths of religion on moral grounds, and asserts for it, not a strictly logical, but a moral certainty, nevertheless declares this conviction to be inevitable where there exist right moral dispositions. "The only caution to be observed," he says, "is that this faith of the intellect (*Vernunftglaube*) is founded on the assumption of moral tempers." If one were utterly indifferent to moral laws, even then the conclusion "would still be supported indeed by strong arguments from analogy, but not by such as an obstinate sceptical bent might not overcome."

It is not my object in these remarks to draw out in full the proofs of the existence and the moral attributes of God. It is rather to illustrate the relation in which these proofs stand to those perceptions, inchoate and spontaneous in the experiences of the soul, which are the ultimate subjective source of religion,

and on which the living appreciation of the revelation of God in external nature is contingent. Let it be observed, moreover, that these native spiritual experiences of dependence, of obligation and accountableness, of hunger for fellowship with the Infinite One, wherein religion takes its rise and has its root, are themselves to be counted as proofs of the reality of the object implied in them. They are significant of the end for which man was made. They presuppose God.

It is true that all our knowledge rests ultimately on an act of faith which finds no warrant in any process of reasoning. We cannot climb to this trust on the steps of a syllogism. We are obliged to start with a confidence in the veracity of our intellectual faculties; and this we have to assume persistently in the whole work of acquiring knowledge. Without this assumption we can no more infer anything or know anything than a bird can fly in a vacuum. All science reposes on this faith in our own minds, which implies and includes faith in the Author of the mind. This primitive faith in ourselves is moral in its nature. So of all that truth which is justly called self-evident. No arguments are to be adduced for it. In every process of reasoning it is presupposed. We can prove nothing except on the basis of propositions that admit of no proof. But if we leave out of account the domain of self-evident truth, which is ground common to both religion and science, religious beliefs, as far as they are sound, are based on adequate evidence. It may

be well, however, to explain somewhat more definitely what is denoted by faith, — to say enough, at least, to guard against certain misconceptions. At the opening of one of the noblest passages in the New Testament, faith is defined as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." A more correct rendering of the verse would be: "The firm assurance of things hoped for, the being convinced of things not seen," — that is, of their reality. Faith makes real to the mind objects of hope, things in the future; it makes real also things not cognizable by the senses. It takes these things out of a kind of dreamland; and, further, it gives to them a substantial being, so that they exercise a due control in the shaping of conduct.

It is superfluous to remark that faith creates nothing, makes nothing different from what it is already. This is evident of that sort of faith which is exercised in relation to mundane affairs. I believe in the virtue of a medicine; but if my faith is well founded, the virtue is in the medicine quite independently of any idea or feeling of mine in regard to it. I believe in a physician; but my belief does not give him the knowledge and the tact in which I confide. He is just the same — just as competent, or incompetent, as the case may be — whether I trust in him or not. Or take for an illustration the faith of a discoverer. Columbus believed that he could reach a continent by sailing westward on a path which Europeans had never taken. His faith urged him onward week after week and

month after month, never turning his prow, regardless of the discontent of his men, until faith was rewarded by sight. He descried at last the green shores and heard the singing of the birds. The poet Schiller, indeed, referring to the ardor of his faith, says that had Columbus not found a continent, he would have created one. In truth, if he had not found the land — had there been no real object answering to his belief — his faith would have been merely a fancy.

It is equally obvious that nothing is added to the sum of religious truth by believing in it; nothing is subtracted by indifference or disbelief. As well might one think of creating or destroying the visible universe by opening or shutting the organ of vision. When a person comes to believe in God, he adds not a single quality to the nature of that Being with whom "is no variableness or shadow of turning;" he simply discerns that which he had failed to see before. He finds God. No one imagines that the prodigal son created his father by returning to him. The forsaken father was always there, waiting for him. Faith in the Gospel is simply the practical acknowledgment of a fact. The Apostle Paul reminds his readers that they have not to climb into heaven and bring Christ down, or to descend into the grave and bring him up. He has already lived among men, and he has risen. The victory of Jesus Christ over sin and over death is a finished achievement. Faith is that recognition of the fact which carries in it appro-

priate fruits in feeling and conduct. No one has understood better what faith is than Martin Luther, himself a great believer. "By faith," says he, "man sees into the heart of God. . . . God is the God of the humble, the miserable, the afflicted, the oppressed, and the desperate, and of those that are brought even to nothing; and his nature is to exalt the humble, to feed the hungry, to give sight to the blind, to comfort the miserable, the afflicted, the bruised, the broken-hearted, to justify sinners, to quicken the dead, and to save the very desperate and damned. For he is an almighty creator, and maketh all things of nothing."

Luther was not wrong in considering that the one essential thing in religion is faith; for without faith there is no real approach to God, — and what is religion but converse or communion with God? Religion is a relation of person to person. The reveries of Pantheism are not religion in the proper sense of the word. He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of those who seek after him. To speak to a being in whose existence one has no belief is little short of lunacy. To pour out gratitude or to address a petition to something held to be void of consciousness, incapable of hearing, is to bid farewell to common-sense. So of the character of God; it has no practical influence on a man's thoughts or conduct except as he believes in it. Luther, moreover, was right, and only followed the Scriptures when he insisted that the source of all

wrong-doing as well as of irreligion is the lack of faith. If men believed in God and in a hereafter as truly and as vividly as they believe in the reality of material things around them, temptations would be stripped of their power, sinful pleasure would have no chance as a rival of the higher good. Men sin because they mistake shadow for substance, and substance for shadow. They deify creatures of God, believing in them with an idolatrous faith. Not seeing them in contrast with an equally clear view of things of imperishable value, they magnify their worth. They are drawn to them by an irresistible attraction, because they are cut off from the influence of the counter-force. They seek to slake the thirst of the spirit for the moment, striving to forget that "he that drinketh of this water shall thirst again."

We started with the thesis that the truths of religion rest upon good and sufficient evidence. Comparing these truths with well-grounded beliefs of a different species where the things believed are within the circle of every-day life, we shall find that the first difference is in the *kind* of proofs represented, not in the comparative degree of weight that belongs to them in the two cases. As regards religious truth the proofs are not experimental. We cannot apply to them the tests of the measuring-rod and the crucible, and other criteria of a tangible kind, which appeal to the senses. The evidence is, to say the least, equally weighty, but is not of the same sort. Among recent theological writers no one has set

forth this not unfamiliar distinction with more force and originality than Mozley. Even in astronomy, not only is the reasoning in great part of a demonstrative kind, being mathematical in its nature, but it has the advantage of being verified by the observed fulfilment of prediction. The eclipse draws a curtain over the disk of the sun at the very moment set down in the almanac. The comet makes its appearance, fulfilling with absolute punctuality a prophecy recorded centuries before. It may be doubted whether astronomical truth — truth so amazing and almost bewildering in its nature — would gain the assent of the common mind, were it not verified to everybody in this visible and astonishing way. Now, the only thing in religion analogous to these external tests is the miracle, — including prophecy, which is one form of miracle. The miracle is a sign, a kind of experimental proof, an appeal to the senses as an aid to faith. Jesus wrought miracles only where there was already a germinant faith. He said to Thomas, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Jesus manifested himself to the senses of the doubting disciple, and that disciple believed. It is a higher thing to believe when there is nothing but testimony, and when the internal probability of the fact is thrown into the scale and avails to carry the mind's assent.

It is therefore an error, either undesigned or intentional, of sceptical writers to describe faith as an arbitrary, groundless acceptance of doctrines in

behalf of which no proof is possible. This is to confound faith and credulity. It makes religion the equivalent of superstition. Montaigne in his Essays, in his genial way of avoiding whatever might give offence or raise a dispute, affords an example of this practice of relegating faith to a province quite apart from reason. The open rejection of religious truth is avoided by this urbane method of remanding the creed to a department where it is presumptuous for plain mortals to intrude. Hume in his Essays, Gibbon in his History, following a common practice of free-thinkers in the last century, in an ironical or sarcastic vein, not unfrequently refer to faith as something too sacred to rest on proof. Thus religious beliefs are made to hang in mid-air, without any support. But the foundation of these beliefs is no less solid for the reason that empirical tests are not applicable to them. The data on which they rest are real, and the inferences from the data are fairly drawn.

The first peculiarity of the truth accepted by faith is, then, the absence of the external or experimental sort of proof in confirmation of it. In addition to this peculiarity, the truths of religion, while they are of the character just described, summon the mind to a forth-putting of energy in an extraordinary degree. An exertion of will is requisite. Take the fundamental truth of religion, the existence of a personal God. The proofs of the being of God are so strong that they would suffice to produce con-

viction in every reasonable mind if the proposition were not one so amazing in its nature. To accept it and rest in it requires a certain energy of trust. "This principle of trust," says Mozley, "is faith, — the same principle by which we repose in a witness of good character who informs us of a marvellous occurrence — so marvellous that the trust in his testimony has to be sustained by a certain effort of the reasonable will." The timidity of reason has to be overcome by a courageous exercise of will. In appropriating or making our own the things of faith, there is a venture to be made on the ground of the evidence without the stimulus and support of an appeal to the senses. In matters of the highest moment which affect our destiny, we have to go upon trust, — a reasonable trust, to be sure, yet requiring to be maintained even in the face of impressions seemingly adverse to it, which come in through the senses. Now, unless the phenomena which are the reasonable ground of faith, and which pertain on the one side to our moral and spiritual experience, are vividly apprehended, the soul will be too timid to make the venture. The stake is too great, the issue too momentous. We are called upon to take a leap in the dark, without seeing what our feet are to touch. There is proof enough, but there is a seeming conflict with the senses. The elements of uncertainty are at once exaggerated. Courage gives way. Many people are afraid in the dark, out of doors and in their own homes, even when they know

that there is no rational ground for apprehension. Infidelity is a species of cowardice.

In a charming passage of the Phædo, Socrates, after much wise talk about the future life, says: "To affirm positively that all is exactly as I have described, would not befit a man of sense. But since the soul is evidently immortal, that this or something like it is true of our souls and their future habitations, — this I think it does befit him to believe, and it is worth risking his faith upon, for the risk is a glorious one indeed." And then later, when Crito inquires, "'How do you wish us to bury you?' 'Just as you please,' he answered, 'if you only get hold of me and do not let me escape you.' And quietly laughing, and glancing at us, he said: 'I cannot persuade Crito, my friends, that this Socrates who is now talking with you and laying down each one of these propositions is my very self; for his mind is full of the thought that I am he whom he is to see in a little while as a corpse; and so he asks how he shall bury me.'"

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews enumerates a list of heroes of faith, — Abraham, Moses, and the others. Their faith nerved them to risk everything without fear as to the result. It was not an irrational confidence. Had it been a groundless trust, their bravery would have been mere foolhardiness. Their distinction was that they had the energy to act upon an expectation which, though reasonable in its character, ran counter to all the appearances. Not with-

out truth has it been said of heroism in general, that it partakes of a supernatural quality.

A number of years ago I read an account of a visit made by the Prince of Wales in company with an eminent man of science to a great iron foundry. They stood together by a stream of molten iron flowing slowly out of the smelting furnace. "Do you believe in science?" said his companion to the Prince. "I do," was the reply. "Then thrust your moistened finger into that stream." The Prince at once divided the stream with his finger, and the finger was not harmed. Whether this particular incident occurred or not, the same thing is not infrequently done by workmen in foundries. On the instant of the contact of the hand with the fiery liquid there ensues what the scientific men call "the spheroidal state." The sudden evaporation is somehow attended by a repellency that perfectly shields the flesh for the moment from contact with the burning substance through which it passes. A learned professor has related to me that having had occasion to refer in a popular lecture to the principle of the "spheroidal state," and to explain how a stream of molten iron could be thus parted by the naked hand with impunity, a lad among his hearers informed him that his father, a workman in a foundry near by, had often done it. The lecturer repaired to the place, and the workman repeated the experiment in his presence; but in reply to an inquiry, informed him that the other workmen were afraid to do it. The

professor to whom I refer has more than once cut with his finger the glowing stream as it flowed out in a slow current from the heated furnace.

We may suppose a person to understand the principle of the "spheroidal state," and how it is that the hand, with only the ordinary amount of natural moisture upon it, can be safely passed through such a current. Nevertheless, he might shrink from making the experiment. The sight of the molten liquid might induce a recoil which his faith in the principle would not suffice to overcome. Even in the case to which I have referred, the workmen who saw one of their companions try the experiment again and again, were kept back by a certain timidity from following his example. An unwonted energy, an unwonted boldness, are requisite to neutralize the impression made on the mind through the senses, let reason say what it will.

It follows that there are grades of faith. We read in the Gospel of Mark that a father who had brought his poor diseased child to Christ, "said with tears, 'Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.'" The Evangelist Luke records the fact that the Disciples of Jesus came to him with the prayer, "Increase our faith." The petition implies that there is a difficulty in believing. Many Christian disciples of later times have found it to be so, both in respect to that general faith in God's presence, power, and love which the Apostles then had specially in mind, and in respect to trust in the revelation of his mercy

through Christ. Where there is intellectual assent, another element must be mixed with it to constitute faith. Why do we not *feel* that God is near us and with us; that not a sparrow falls to the ground without him; that he really pities and cares for us; that he will provide for us; that he loves us even when he makes us suffer; that he can make all things which occur to work together for our good; that nations, like individuals, are in his hand? Why do we not feel that if we are stripped of all earthly good, he can more than make up the loss to us; that in his favor there is life in the highest sense, — true joy? In a word, why is not God more real to us? How near is the Power on which we depend for life and breath and all things! How narrow, after all, is the space that is open to the action of our wills! Its boundaries are close upon us, and on every side is God! The place and time of our birth, our personal characteristics, the outward circumstances of our life, the results of our plans and endeavors, the length of our days, all — save the limited effects left contingent upon our choice — are determined by God. Man proposes, but God disposes. He is without us, ordering the course of events. He is within, speaking through conscience. He hems us in on every side, and confronts us at every turn. Why should he be to us as if he were not?

No doubt the considerations already brought forward may suggest a partial answer to the question. We live in a world of sense, and the world of sense

abides with us early and late. We live in the midst of things seen and temporal. The material aspect of human existence is constantly before us. On every hand is the appalling spectacle of human decay and death. The generations come and go, carried away "as by a flood." After all, however, this explanation of the dulness of faith appears inadequate. It does not go to the root. We believe in a thousand things that we do not see. The past history of the world I did not myself witness. I believe in the existence of a million stars which I have never beheld. But these, it may be said, are in their own nature visible. But heat is invisible; the force of gravity is invisible. Yet we believe in these. We believe that the men and women about us have souls, although we have never seen them, nor are they capable of being seen; for —

> "We are spirits clad in veils,
> Man by man was never seen;
> All our deep communing fails
> To remove the shadowy screen."

Why should the visible scene around us intercept the view of God instead of manifesting him? When we look within, when in a truthful spirit we inquire before the bar of our own judgment in what spirit we have lived, and when we contemplate mankind earnestly in their present condition and their past history, we have to confess that human nature is afflicted with a malady, which yet is not properly called a malady, since men accuse themselves and

blame themselves on account of it and on account of the multiform types of wrong-doing that spring out of it, as fruits from a tree. We may leave it, if we choose, to philosophers and to theologians to discuss the origin of sin, how it spread, and the grounds of personal responsibility for it. Of the fact of sin there can be no question. In one of Professor Huxley's recent excursions into the field of theology he drops for a moment from his usually confident and almost elated mood into a more pensive strain. I quote the paragraph, printing however, two or three words in a type that will call to them special attention: —

"I know no study which is so unutterably saddening as that of the evolution of humanity as it is set forth in the annals of history. Out of the darkness of prehistoric ages man emerges with the marks of his lowly origin strong upon him. He is a brute only more intelligent than the other brutes; a blind prey to impulses which as often as not lead him to destruction; a victim to endless illusions, which make his mental existence a terror and a burden, and fill his physical life with barren toil and battle. He retains a degree of physical comfort, and develops a more or less workable theory of life, in such favorable situations as the plains of Mesopotamia and of Egypt, and then, for thousands and thousands of years, struggles with varying fortunes, attended by INFINITE WICKEDNESS, bloodshed, and misery, to maintain himself at this point against the greed and the ambition of his fellow-men. He makes a point of killing and otherwise persecuting all those who first try to get him to move on; and when he has moved on a step, foolishly confers post-

mortem deification on his victims. He exactly repeats the process with all who want to step yet farther. And the best men of the best epochs are simply those who make the fewest blunders and commit the fewest sins."

How much truth there is in this vivid picture of the past of mankind is plain to all thoughtful persons. What is worthy of note is that along with what is said of the "evolution of humanity," and notwithstanding the apparent sanction given to that unproved type of evolutionary theory which makes man at the start nothing but an intelligent brute, there is still a perception that his career is something more than a chapter in natural history; that is, moral history is not completely metamorphosed into natural history. There has been "INFINITE WICKEDNESS." Nay, more; the most that can be claimed for the "best" of men is that they "commit the fewest sins." Has the brilliant naturalist ever pondered what is involved in these unquestioned facts? Has he ever grasped them in their full purport, and sought to understand what they presuppose respecting the race of mankind? Is he wise enough to be sure that the solution of them in the Scriptures, and the Christian explanation of the radical source of the "bloodshed and misery," the "greed and ambition," the "endless illusions" on which he dwells so pathetically, is not after all the most philosophical and satisfactory of all solutions? Grant that sin, in its origin and diffusion, and the union of individual responsibility and guilt with a common moral depravity coextensive with the race,

involves mystery. May it not be, as Coleridge has said, the one mystery that makes all things else clear? Grant that even when sin is perceived to be the root of misery, it is hard fully to explain the slowness of the divine process of recovery and redemption, yet the gravest difficulty is taken out of the way; a dark shadow is removed from the character of God and his administration.

The paragraph which I have quoted from Professor Huxley recalls a striking passage from the pen of a most gifted man, but a man quite different in the cast of his thoughts from the distinguished naturalist. The passage which follows is extracted from the "Apologia" of John Henry Newman. After speaking of the certainty which he has of the being of God, on the ground of the inward testimonies of heart and conscience, he adds: —

"Were it not for this voice, speaking so clearly in my conscience and my heart, I should be an atheist or a pantheist or a polytheist when I looked into the world. I am speaking for myself only, and I am far from denying the real force of the arguments in proof of a God, drawn from the general facts of human society; but these do not warm me or enlighten me; they do not take away the winter of my desolation, or make the buds unfold and the leaves grow within me, and my moral being rejoice. The sight of the world is nothing else than the prophet's scroll, full of 'lamentations and mourning and woe.'

"To consider the world in its length and breadth, the many races of man, their starts, their fortunes, their

mutual alienations, their conflicts; . . . the greatness and littleness of man, his far-reaching aims, his short duration, the curtain hung over his futurity; the disappointments of life, the defeat of good, the success of evil, physical pain, moral anguish, the prevalence and intensity of sin, the pervading idolatries; the dreary, hopeless irreligion, that condition of the whole race so perfectly yet exactly described in the Apostle's words ('having no hope, and without God in the world'), — all this is a vision to dizzy and appall, and inflicts upon the mind the sense of a profound mystery, which is absolutely beyond human solution.

"What shall be said to this heart-piercing, reason-bewildering fact? . . . Did I see a boy of good make and mind, with the tokens on him of a refined nature, cast upon the world without provision, unable to say whence he came, his birthplace, his family connections, I should conclude that there was some mystery connected with his history, and that he was one of whom, from one cause or other, his parents were ashamed. . . . And so I argue about the world; if there be a God, since there is a God, the human race is implicated in some terrible aboriginal calamity. It is out of joint with the purposes of its Creator. This is a fact, — a fact as true as the fact of its existence; and thus the doctrine of what is theologically called original sin becomes to me almost as certain as that the world exists, and as the existence of God."

I have not quoted the whole of these impressive paragraphs of Newman, but I have quoted enough to show the points of strong resemblance between this description of the feelings excited by a calm survey

of men and their history, and that given in the citation from Professor Huxley. If Newman inserts in the dark catalogue "the prevalence and intensity of sin," the phrase is equivalent to the "infinite wickedness," the contemplation of which saddens the mind of Huxley. But the difference is that the theologian does not suffer that most terrible fact of evil, involving guilt, which exhibits itself everywhere in human history, — a fact in its very nature abnormal; the abnormal character of which cannot be denied without a denial of the fact itself, — to be lightly passed by. He sees in it, in the universality of transgression, proof that in some inscrutable way the race has made shipwreck of itself. There is a source — however incapable it may be of full explication — of this corruption, which, be it never forgotten, is not physical, but is moral and culpable. There must be a *fons et origo malorum.* Writers of the class of Professor Huxley can see and acknowledge the "infinite wickedness" of the world, and designate it by its right name. They can see that the only merit of "the best men of the best epochs" is that they "commit the fewest sins." They call them "SINS," and distinguish them from "blunders." They confess with pain that immoralities and crimes make up a great part of the annals of mankind. Theorizing about "the evolution of humanity" has to reconcile itself, somehow or other, with human responsibility and with the appalling moral depravity which has spread over the race. It is seen clearly enough that to seek to turn, by any

hocus-pocus of speculation, whether physical or metaphysical, evil into good, to transmute sin into something not base or blameworthy, is to undertake to paralyze conscience and to undermine the moral basis of society. So here remains the awful fact of sin, and of a common sin, or of sin that is common. Here is the fact which Professor Huxley terms the "*infinite wickedness*" that is and has been in the world since men began to exist in it. Here is the reason why Professor Huxley, and every other man who honestly goes through an act of self-judgment, is obliged to bow his head like the publican in the parable.

Sin being an undeniable fact, and being in its nature an element of disorder, that our perception of God and of things spiritual should be to a certain degree darkened by the perversion of the will in its inmost inclination, by the "infinite wickedness" which Professor Huxley deplores, and of which he truly says that the "best men of the best epochs" partake, is what might naturally be expected.

Light is thus thrown on the psychology of doubt and disbelief. We have to take account of the fact that we have fallen into a habit of mind discordant with our nature, — that better nature which is affiliated to God; and one effect of this perversion is to obscure the discernment of things supernatural. The life of self which we lead, and which Christ undertook to destroy; the habit of living to the world and of placing our chief good, and seeking the satisfaction of the spirit, within the bounds of created

nature, — is the radical source of unbelief. We have not liked to retain God in our knowledge. Herschel remarks of the cosmic system as revealed by astronomy that it is directly opposed to the ordinary conception of men. To them the earth is the centre; the sun moves in a circle around it; the starry heavens are a canopy stretched over it. Science contradicts and upsets this natural view of things. But not more than the truth of religion subverts that habit of thought in which the soul is self-centred and the world is looked upon as tributary to its gratification. It is a dictum of common-sense, as well as a word of the Lord, that the heart will be where its treasure is. Can it be considered strange that the course of our mental life — the currents of thought and feeling — should be adjusted to the natural order within which, exclusively, our affections find their chosen objects, and above which our desires and aspirations do not rise? The laws of association by which the process of our thoughts is determined, keep the attention upon the object of the heart's love. As to all that lies beyond, the vividness of our ideas, and eventually even our beliefs, are subject to the same influence. The perceptions that engender faith are wanting. The sense of dependence, humility in the room of self-assertion, the craving for something higher than earthly good, the sharp rebukes of conscience, are absent. Faith is a plant that cannot spring up in so barren a soil. One might as well hope to impart science to one void of curiosity and

without any true sense of the value of knowledge. Receptivity of one kind or another is the door of access for all higher good.

If there be such a hindrance to the exercise of faith in general, a peculiar obstacle interferes with trust in the revelation of the love of God in the religion of the Gospel. In this branch of the discussion it is pertinent to refer to the well-known phenomena of Christian experience. There is an abundance of testimony, in the history of the Church and in Christian biography, to sustain the remarks which are to follow. To facts of this nature the class whom Newman somewhere denominates "mere men of letters" may think it beneath them to attend. Not so will judge wise and candid students of human nature, be their creed what it may.

It often happens that when the habit of worldliness is partially broken up, and self-reproach is awakened, the feeling of unworthiness makes it hard to look upon God in any other light than that of a judge. Like Luther in his earlier days, we are inclined to think of Christ as having come into the world to condemn rather than to save. He seems to be a second Moses, only tenfold more rigid and austere than the first. We read the Sermon on the Mount, and find no difficulty in believing what he says of the rigor of the law, the ideal of obligation, — penetrating to the inmost thought of the heart, — finding in unrighteous anger the seed-principle of murder. We believe all this; but we do not so easily believe in the assurance

that he is meek and lowly in heart, that "the bruised reed he will not break." The invitation to come unto him and find rest is heard with a kind of distrust. There is a common saying that it is hard to forgive those whom we have injured. Certainly we are apt to imagine them to feel unkindly towards us. A sense of ill-desert banishes men from God the more effectually because they know it to be a true and right feeling, and know that if they condemn their sin God condemns it even more. Such is the effect of the moral ideal brought within the pale of consciousness. But the law reveals man to himself; it does not reveal God to man save partially and in one relation. He is more than law and justice and holiness. There is a mercifulness deeper than all. He loves his enemies; and we are exhorted in the Sermon on the Mount to copy his example by doing good to those who treat us ill. "God commendeth his love to us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Yet, notwithstanding this manifestation of the love of God, and of his willingness to forgive the ill-deserving, the sense of guilt and of shame at the lives we have led may hinder us from believing in him. The Prodigal Son, when he resolved to go back to his father, only thought to apply for the place of a servant. "Make me as one of thy hired servants," — that should be his prayer. That was the extent of his hope. But when, weary, foot-sore, and famished, he caught sight of his father, hastening to meet him, and saw that his heart was full of love and pity, he forgot

this part of his intended petition. He did not beg to be made a servant. All his dread was dispelled.

Now that we have glanced at the principal hindrances in the way of believing, it will not be wandering from our subject to inquire by what means faith may be increased.

Not by the mere exercise of the understanding, — the inquisitive and reasoning faculty. The understanding, it has been all along implied, has its rights in matters of religion. We cannot be required to believe anything in conflict with the dictates of sound reason. But when men talk of reason and of a supposed conflict between Christianity and reason, it is important to inquire what precisely is signified by the term. Whose reason is meant? Is it the reason of an immature mind? Is it reason warped by prejudice, heated by passion, or blinded by conceit and self-admiration? A conflict between reason as thus described and the Christian system is of no significance in opposition to the latter. When we speak of the accordance of Christianity with reason, we mean the reason of a right-minded man whose intellectual vision is purified. We mean reason regenerated. The Christian cause need not shrink from answering to a tribunal thus qualified for passing judgment. In the case of an historical religion like Christianity, we have a right to examine the testimony to the facts offered to our credence. To attribute all sorts of doubt and questioning to an evil heart is quite unwarrantable. To condemn dissent from the tenets or interpretations

of a particular sect or school, as if it were infallible, is arrogant. At the same time our convictions of religious truth do not take their rise in the understanding. Define it as you will, there is such a thing as spiritual discernment. A quickened receptivity develops an insight analogous to higher perceptions in the province of Poetry and Art. There are truths which shine in their own light. They impress the soul directly with the evidence of their reality. They will sometimes flash on the mind after long waiting and fruitless groping in the dark. Christ did not say: Blessed are men of genius; blessed are those who have the ability and leisure for investigation; blessed are the keen logicians. But he said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit;" "Blessed are the pure in heart;" "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." He took a little child and placed him in the midst of his Disciples, as an example of the humility required for admission into his kingdom. His first followers were not distinguished for their intellectual powers. They were unlearned men. It is found — in these days not infrequently — that men eminent for their intellectual powers and acquirements are unbelievers. Numerous examples, to be sure, of faith on the part of men equally eminent — men like Kepler, Leibnitz, Newton, Faraday — are not wanting. But apart from striking examples of the power of Christianity to convince the most powerful minds, no Christian believer has any occasion to be disquieted for the reason that men excelling in

science or scholarship stand aloof from the Gospel, or even if they profess atheism. If the secret of unbelief, or its inmost source, be the alienation of the heart from God, what is there in mere intellectual culture to furnish a remedy? A man may not be cured of a moral distemper by getting knowledge, any more than by getting fame or getting money.

Two things are to be borne in mind. In the first place, there is abundant evidence that an awakening of conscience, or a quickening of moral sensibility in any form, will often dissipate doubt, and create an inward assurance in another way than by the solving of intellectual problems. It is frequently seen, also, that the understanding, even when its path is made smooth, its difficulties cleared up, its hard questions answered, does not engender faith. A negative work is accomplished, but perhaps nothing more. The bark is all ready to move on the waters, the sails are spread, but there is no breeze to fill them. To break through the bonds of nature, and lay hold of the supernatural, — that all our reasonings do not lend us the power to do. Fetters have been shaken off which held us to the earth, but no wings have been given on which to soar aloft. Light has come, but not life.

Logic alone cannot develop faith; but more is to be hoped from that kind of thoughtfulness which tends to detach the heart from earthly good. He who learns how insufficient the world is for the soul, will be prepared to turn to something higher. For this

reason, in a multitude of instances, trouble has proved to be a school of faith. One who has trusted in riches, but who is despoiled of them and reduced to poverty, looks about for something more substantial to rest upon. One who has made a god of reputation, but becomes, either with or without his fault, unpopular and odious, or obscure and forgotten, is naturally prompted to seek for a good more satisfying and more lasting than the breath of human praise. How many have learned more of God in one hour of bitter sorrow, when bereaved of those who made a part of their life, than they had learned in years of study! They open the Bible, and meet there messages from the Unseen which before had fallen on listless ears. Bowed down with grief, they hear the sweet and majestic words, "He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted!" When the light goes out on the hearthstone, when nothing meets the eye but tokens left behind by those gone from us, no more to return, then perchance we lift our eyes from the darkened earth, and lo! like the patriarch of old, we see the heavens radiant with stars not seen in the glare of day. Out of anguish that seemed unbearable, out of paroxysms of grief, out of the long hours of dull pain, are plucked fruits precious enough to outweigh the suffering which they cost. The soul is brought a little nearer to God. Saints there have been who have welcomed pain. Pascal prayed: "If the world filled up the affections of my heart while I was in bodily vigor, let that vigor be laid low if my spiritual

good require it! . . . Dispose of me altogether as thou shalt see best! Replenish or impoverish me as thou wilt! But conform my will to thine; and enable me, in an humble and entire submission, and a holy confidence, to wait thy providential guidance, and to acquiesce in thy gracious disposal!"

It is sometimes made a reproach to religion that it is the refuge of the weak, the disappointed, the desponding. But the question is whether the realities of existence are not more truly discerned from the point of view gained by such, — whether the mental vision is not clearer.

Not long after the death of his wife, Thomas Carlyle wrote to his friend, Erskine of Linlathen, as follows: —

"'Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done,' — what else can we say? The other night, in my sleepless tossings about, which were growing more and more miserable, these words, that brief and grand prayer, came strangely into my mind, with an altogether new emphasis, as if written and shining for me in mild pure splendor on the black bosom of the night there; when I, as it were, read them, word by word, with a sudden check to my imperfect wanderings, with a sudden softness of composure that was most unexpected. Not perhaps for thirty or forty years had I ever formally repeated that prayer; nay, I never felt before how intensely the voice of man's soul it is, — the inmost aspiration of all that is high and pious in poor human nature; right worthy to be recommended with an, 'After this manner pray ye.'"

How did Carlyle come to see what he had never seen before, and to feel what he had never before felt? Have the teachers of the Church in all ages been so far astray when, following Christ and the Apostles, they have talked of blindness of mind and of spiritual light?

Another effective mode of promoting faith is obedience, even if, owing to the dulness of the organ of hearing, one hears but faintly the voice of him who commands. With obedience there begins a rectification of the will, and a quickening of the power of discernment will follow. We are then steering by the right star, albeit we dimly perceive it. No man has any assurance that he will discover religious truth unless he has first made up his mind to live by it. It is ordained that we shall feel our way in religion. The truth of religion is bread for the hungry; we must "taste and see" that the Lord is good. Even more important is it to bear in mind that the gates of light are shut to him who is not bent upon walking in the light. "He that will [or rather, willeth to] do my will shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." Here, not thinking, but doing, is made the road to knowledge.

Another means of increasing faith is the contemplation of Christ. Wherever men are to be lifted above the ordinary plane of character and achievement, there is need of the inspiration of personal leadership. The history of every nation's deliverance from peril

or from degradation illustrates this truth. The highest of all illustrations is afforded in Christianity. Christ came to draw men out of the life of unbelief into a fellowship with himself, — a fellowship in his own spiritual life of communion with the Father. Here on earth he himself lived by faith. We are invited to look to him as the Author and Finisher of our faith. The word here rendered "Author" is the same as that which stands for "Captain" where he is called "the Captain of our salvation," and means both example and forerunner. He is the "Author," or forerunner, in faith, since by looking forward to the joy set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame. His victory on the cross was by faith, — a faith which he would fain impart to us. He replied to the Tempter that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. He thanked the Father for choosing humble men to be his disciples, because it seemed good in the Father's sight. Faith upheld him in the garden when he said: "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt;" and on the cross when he said: "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." He is the vine; we are the branches. By looking to him, we become partakers of his inward life, — the life of faith, as well as of holiness and peace. If his communion with God was a real thing and not a mockery and a delusion, then all that is presupposed in that communion is also real. He inspires with faith by his own example.

The last and principal means of deepening faith, to

be adverted to, is prayer. The Disciples came to Jesus with the supplication: "Increase our faith." Mere thinking and striving will not avail. Christ thanked the Father for the faith of the Disciples because it was the Father who had hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Of Peter's fervent avowal of faith in him as the Son of God he said: "Flesh and blood have not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Whoever seeks to enliven his own faith, or the faith of others in whom he is interested, finds out by experiment that thought and argument and entreaty do not suffice. Light must come from the Source of light. Nothing is left but to resort directly to God, —

> "No help but prayer, —
> A breath that fleets beyond this iron world
> And touches him that made it."

And here there is a well-founded assurance that none apply to God in vain. There is one prayer that may be offered with an absolute certainty that the very thing sought for will be granted. With respect to everything else, in our limited knowledge of what is best for us, we have to connect with each petition an acknowledgment of submission to the divine will and wisdom. We implore God to give, but to withhold, should it seem to him best. But to the prayer for the enlightening Spirit of God no proviso need be appended. The doctrine of a divine influence even

the most enlightened heathen have found no difficulty in accepting. It is declared, without qualification, in the Scriptures that God is willing to give his Spirit to them who ask. We can apply to him, if there be in us faith enough to go to him at all, confident that we shall receive the very thing that we desire for ourselves. He can open the eyes of the blind. He can touch the soul with his own mysterious, life-giving Spirit, and quicken it to a perception of realities now dim and shadowy. He is willing to do that. "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Whoever is baffled by mysteries that he cannot unravel, and confused by problems that he cannot solve, can approach God as a child, and ask the Father to teach him.

Poor Hartley Coleridge wrote these lines, out of a heart surcharged with suffering: —

> "Be not ashamed to pray: to pray is right.
> Pray, if thou canst, with hope; but ever pray,
> Though hope be weak, or sick with long delay.
> Pray in the darkness, if there be no light.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Pray to be perfect, though material leaven
> Forbid the spirit so on earth to be.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> But if for any wish thou darest not pray,
> Then pray to God to cast that wish away."

The truly great poets are the profoundest preachers. These are words of Tennyson: —

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?"

SUPPLEMENTARY ESSAYS.

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I.

REMARKS ON THE AUTHORSHIP AND DATE OF THE GOSPELS.

It is well known that of the four documents which constitute the authorities for the life of Jesus, the first three Gospels, which are called the Synoptics, belong together in a group, and that the Fourth Gospel, having marked peculiarities in distinction from them, stands by itself.

It is a familiar fact to all who have looked attentively at the Synoptics that they contain a good deal of matter in common. Beyond what is comprised in all three, there is also a portion of material that each couple in the three pairs of Synoptical writings share, and more or less matter besides, that each author presents exclusively. In the matter which is common to the three or to either two, the language employed is to a large extent identical, although at the same time there are not wanting dissimilarities in words as well as in the details of the narrative. The rela-

tion of the three documents to one another suggests questions as to their origin which are not less important than curious. The three writers must have drawn from a common source or sources. Were these sources, or the main source, oral tradition, or tradition previously existing in a written form? Were the three authors dependent upon one another; and if so, which were the borrowers? Where does the relative priority belong?

It was long the prevalent opinion that Mark is the youngest, and is little more than an abridgment of Matthew and Luke. One of the last defenders of this theory was Bleek, a scholar of great learning and ability, and of eminent candor. It was a plausible view. Here is one of the parallelisms which he adduces: —

> "And when even was come." — Matt. viii. 16.
>
> "And at even when the sun was set." — Mark i. 32.
>
> "And when the sun was setting." — Luke iv. 40.

In the original, the words quoted above from Matthew, and the first clause of Mark — "and at even" — are precisely the same; and the expression in Luke (except that it is in the participial form) is identical with the second phrase in Mark. At the first glance it would seem that Mark had combined the two statements. Nevertheless a further comparison of the Gospels makes it clear that this is not the fact. In the judgment of almost all scholars at present, Mark is the independent narrator. Either Matthew

and Luke draw what they contain of "the triple tradition" directly from him, or from a source on which the three are in common dependent. That the first of these suppositions is the correct one, is at present the conclusion of most of the ablest critics. We have to guard, however, against fallacious inferences from the phenomena just described. There are such inferences in the Article by Dr. Edwin A. Abbott on the Gospels, in the "Encyclopedia Britannica." He speaks of "the triple tradition" as if it were the original, or the one specially, if not exclusively, trustworthy tradition. His erroneous implications are well exposed by Dr. Salmon in his "Introduction to the New Testament." "It is obvious that the phrases 'triple tradition,' 'twofold tradition,' express phenomena as they appear to us, not things as they are in themselves. You would feel that a man knew very little of astronomy if he spoke of the full moon and the half moon and the new moon in such a way as to lead one to think that he took these for three distinct heavenly bodies, and not for the same body differently illuminated. . . . When one of our authorities fails, we must not assume without examination that the two remaining ones are now deriving their narrative from some new source." The matter which two of the Evangelists alone present, or even one alone, may be from a source as old as that at the basis of Mark's narrative. If Mark was written first, as is now the prevalent view, the other Evangelists may have taken up the matter which was thus at hand, and connected with it, from sources equally

trustworthy and equally old with the sources of Mark, their additional narratives. The story of the crucifixion as told by Luke is independent of that as told by Matthew and Mark. Here the "double tradition" is of just the same value as if it had been "triple;" and the accounts given by Luke are not shown to emanate from later authorities, on account of his independence of the two other Evangelists.

There is no reason to distrust the early uncontradicted tradition, which is first on record from Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, that the author of the Second Gospel was Mark, — the same who was at one time a companion of Paul in his journeys, — who set down accounts of the life of the Lord which he had heard from the lips of Peter.

The same Papias, a contemporary of the martyr Polycarp (who died at a very advanced age in 155 or 156), says that Matthew wrote his book in Hebrew, — meaning Aramaic, the dialect then spoken in Palestine. With this statement the early ecclesiastical writers concur. That such was the fact, is believed by most critical scholars now; although there are some who still think that Matthew wrote in Greek. But there is a more important question in relation to the First Gospel. Did Matthew's Writing, whether it were originally in Aramaic or in Greek, comprise all the contents of the present Gospel? Or is the narrative portion, in distinction from the discourses of Jesus, a supplement incorporated with Matthew's Writing by another hand? If it is to be held

that Matthew's Writing was enlarged by another, do the additions embrace the whole, or only a part, of the narrative matter? That the Gospel in its present form has taken up additions of this character, is pretty generally conceded. English critics such as Dr. Westcott hold that in the transference of the Hebrew Gospel into the Greek, some additions were made by the Disciple, whoever he was, who gave out the Writing in its existing form. The prevalent view of the German critics since Schleiermacher is that Matthew's Writing consisted of the discourses merely, and that the rest of the Gospel was drawn from other sources, principally from Mark. Papias, to whose early testimony we must recur, says that Matthew wrote down the *Logia* of the Lord. By *Logia* — which may be translated *Oracles* — the critics to whom I refer understand "discourses," or teachings. This conclusion they affirm with decidely more positiveness than the philological evidence warrants. This will appear to the candid student who will examine what Bleek has written on the point, and especially Bishop Lightfoot's discussion in his chapter on Papias.[1] Papias had in his hands the Greek Gospel as it now stands. This is a sure inference from the date when he wrote. But his own language implies that the use of the Hebrew Matthew was a thing of the past. Matthew, he says, wrote the Oracles in Hebrew, "and each one interpreted them as he could." The verb here is an aorist, and implies a

[1] Essays on Supernatural Religion, p. 172 *seq.*

bygone state of things, a necessity for translating that no longer existed. If Papias knew that the Greek Gospel was an expansion, to a material extent, of the Hebrew Gospel, would he not have made mention of the fact? And if he had mentioned it, would Eusebius, in this case, where he is interested to explain the origin of Matthew's Gospel, have been silent respecting it? On the whole, it must be conceded that on philological grounds the restricted sense of *Logia* in the statement of Papias is not yet fully made out by the critics. But when we examine the First Gospel itself, the current of evidence as to its composite character runs the other way. We find that the teachings of Jesus are not set down with that measure of chronological sequence which would have been expected from one of the Twelve in case he were aiming to produce a consecutive account of the Lord's ministry. The discourses are massed and grouped. And when the narrative portion of the Gospel is looked at, we encounter special difficulties attaching to the supposition of immediate Apostolic authorship. Not to multiply details, the meagre account of the Resurrection at the close is, to say the least, not what would be expected from one of the Twelve. But the dependence of a considerable portion of the narrative matter in Matthew upon Mark, it is contended by the critics, settles the question. According to the modified hypothesis of Weiss, the *Logia* of Matthew did contain, here and there, historical notices. This supposition will account for occasional

instances of priority in Matthew's historical statements, as compared with Mark, and also explain certain other peculiarities in Mark, who is supposed to have had the *Logia* in his hands.

Turning to the Third Gospel, we find at the beginning the assurance of the author, which it is unreasonable to question, that he has made careful inquiries and brought together the information furnished him by eye-witnesses. This was partly oral, and partly in earlier written narratives. Traces of a written document are seen in the Hebraized diction of the first chapters, relating to the birth and infancy of Jesus. It is generally conceded that Mark's Gospel was one of the sources to which Luke resorted. Weiss is one of those who are confident that the *Logia* of Matthew was also used by Luke, and Meyer was of opinion that even the completed Matthew was occasionally consulted. This last opinion is disputed by Weiss; and Weiss's own conclusion that the *Logia* was in Luke's hands, in the form in which the editor of the Greek Matthew took it up, or even that it was in his hands in any form, cannot be considered as yet established. The unity of the Third Gospel and of the Acts in style, demonstrates the identity of authorship. No satisfactory explanation of the passages in Acts where the first person plural is used — the "we-passages" — has been given, except that which makes them the product of the author's own pen, thus indicating that he was a fellow-traveller with the Apostle Paul. It

is now proved to the satisfaction of all scholars that Marcion's Luke was an abridgment of the canonical Gospel, and not the basis of it. This latter theory, which was defended by the author of "Supernatural Religion," is quietly retracted in the preface to his later edition. Thus we have external proof, early in the second century, of the acceptance and established authority of the canonical Gospel of Luke among the churches.

We are not without the means of determining within narrow limits the date of the Synoptical Gospels. The indications that they were written at about the time of the capture of Jerusalem by Titus, are unmistakable. At any considerably later date, the apparent conjunction of the fall of the city and of the temple with the Parousia would have been avoided or explained. We observe in Matthew, in the midst of the predictive discourse of Jesus, a parenthesis which it is more natural to suppose was thrown in by the author of the Gospel (Matt. xxiv. 15): "When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that readeth understand)," etc. The last clause would appear to imply that the event referred to as a sign was imminent, or not far in the future. Everything favors the conclusion that the Gospel in the existing form appeared after the beginning of the mortal struggle of the Romans with the Jews, or between A. D. 65 and 70. Mark's Gospel

was still earlier. The language of the passages relative to the Parousia, in Luke, is consistent with the supposition that he wrote after the fall of Jerusalem, but not with the supposition that it was long after.

The circumstance that Mark's Gospel is thought to have been one of the principal sources of the narrative matter in Matthew and in Luke, is fallaciously used to lessen comparatively the credit of these two authorities. Mark is cited by not a few as "the oldest authority," and the contents of his Gospel as "the earliest tradition," — only the *Logia* of Matthew being older. But there is nothing to oblige us to suppose that the narrative matter in Luke (for example), which Mark does not contain, is from any "later" source than Mark's narrative. The long passage which belongs to Luke exclusively, from chapter ix. 51 to chapter xviii. 14, embraces materials as trustworthy and as "early" (if we look at the sources whence Luke derived them), as the accounts given by Mark. We know that Mark omitted the greater part of the sayings of Jesus which were in the *Logia* of Matthew. There is no doubt that he omitted to gather up a great deal besides, which another inquirer, like Luke, might have ascertained from "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word." To reject historical accounts, therefore, merely because they are not comprised in an historical sketch as brief as that of Mark, is quite without warrant. An instance of the error to which I advert is the hypothesis of those German critics who hold that Jesus did not distinctly

profess to be the Messiah until the conversation with the Disciples at Cæsarea Philippi (Mark viii. 27 *seq.*). This theory is thought to be supported by the doubt implied in the message of John the Baptist to Jesus. But the awakening of a question of this sort in John's mind is easily explained by the mere fact that there had been no such demonstration on the part of Jesus as John, with the ideas of the coming kingdom that still lingered in his mind, had looked for. It is *a priori* in the highest degree improbable that the Disciples attached themselves to Jesus, followed him about so long, and it may be added, heard how, as Mark himself relates, he was addressed by demoniacs as the Christ, and yet had no definite impression as to who he really was, and neither asked questions nor received answers on this point, so interesting and momentous as they must have felt it to be. The confession of Peter, and the warm expression of approbation by Jesus that followed, are accounted for when it is remembered that the course taken by him, so diverse from the popular idea of the Messiah, occasioned queries and debates as to whether he could be the Promised One himself, and that Peter, despite any seeming evidence to the contrary, was inwardly convinced, and broke out in a fervent confession of faith. If we connect with the account of the conversation with the Disciples at Cæsarea Philippi, John's explanation of the confession of Peter as having its occasion in the falling away of numerous Galilean followers (John vi. 66), we shall find a more full explanation of the

reason for the question which Jesus, according to the Synoptics, addressed to the Twelve. The people were beginning to think that he was some other than the Messiah. The hypothesis that Jesus was performing miracles and teaching incognito, even as regards his family of Disciples, is with difficulty reconcilable with the circumstances of his baptism, that epochal transaction, even if it be imagined that nothing then occurred except what Mark records. But there are no sound historical reasons to dissuade us from relying on the supplementary accounts of the other Synoptics.

The Synoptical Gospels are confined in the main to the Galilean ministry of Jesus. The Apostles took up their abode at Jerusalem. There was the seat and centre of their earliest instructions. What had occurred in Jerusalem and the neighborhood, what belonged to the Judæan events in the life of Jesus, was familiar there, and could be easily learned by new converts. It was respecting the Galilean ministry that curiosity would especially need to be satisfied. Everything that we know on the subject points to the conclusion that the earliest tradition to be collected and crystallized related to this branch of the Saviour's public work. The Synoptics give us the Galilean tradition as it was formed and shaped at Jerusalem.

We have now to consider the state of the discussion concerning the authorship of the Fourth Gospel.

It is a significant fact that the position taken by Baur, the leader, in recent times, of the assault upon its genuineness, has now, in two essential particulars, been generally given up. He placed, and it was necessary to his general scheme of historical and doctrinal development that he should place, the date of the Gospel as late as 160. How untenable this proposition is, those who sympathize with Baur's opinion that John was not the author, have united with their opponents in affirming. Whoever its author was, it must have been in use early in the second century. The opponents of its genuineness admit that 130 is the latest date that can be assigned for its composition. Baur maintained that the Gospel is a fiction in which the author was so absorbed in certain religious ideas that he wove about them a garb of narrative, hardly conscious that he was framing a romance. Now, it is conceded that the Gospel includes traditional materials respecting Jesus of real historical value. It is admitted that the book contains details which spring from personal recollection and acquaintance with the facts, and with respect to which there is no conceivable theological motive for their insertion. Why, to take a single example, should it be said (John i. 44), "Now, Philip was from Bethsaida"? It is a favorite theory that the Fourth Gospel was composed by a disciple or disciples of the Apostle John, and includes more or less information actually derived from him. It is plain that Baur's conception of the nature of the work is shattered by these new

hypotheses respecting it. Whether the new ground is more tenable than the old, may be a question; but there is no doubt that the ground at present taken by the negative criticism *is* new.

The German critics have handled this disputed question with unsurpassed learning and ability. But they have too frequently failed to do justice to the external evidence for the Johannine authorship. To the majority of English scholars this defect in many of the German discussions is patent. The attempt of Keim, Holtzmann, and others to make it out that the Apostle John never lived in Asia Minor, is an example of this weakness as regards the estimate of the historical proofs. Because Irenæus thought that Papias was a disciple of John the Apostle, when possibly he was not, although he was a disciple of John the Presbyter, it is inferred that Irenæus was talking at cross purposes with his teacher, Polycarp, and imagined that he was giving reminiscences of the Apostle, when it was really the other John, the Presbyter, to whom Polycarp's narratives related! The difference is, as Weizsäcker observes, that Irenæus was a personal acquaintance of Polycarp, but not of Papias. Of course there is an accumulation of proofs that John lived and died at Ephesus. Schürer has shown a more judicial spirit in his remark on the notion of Keim: "For this assumption there appears to me to be no ground." But even Schürer, a scholar to whom we generally look for sound judgments, in his recent Essay on "The Present State of

the Johannine Controversy" (from which the last quotation is taken), remarks: "But even though Irenæus did hear Polycarp relate [what he had known] of the Apostle John, this is still no testimony for the Johannine origin of the Gospel." Matthew Arnold claims for the English mind a superior capacity for weighing evidence, — a quality which he attributes to long familiarity with the law of evidence in the English system of jurisprudence. It has been suggested that the law of evidence itself is not less a product than a cause of this judicial instinct. It would seem that there is some ground for this observation of Arnold. It is a fact that Irenæus in his early youth was acquainted with Polycarp. When Polycarp died (in 155 or 156), Irenæus was a full-grown man. That he should say what he does of the four canonical Gospels as the four pillars of the Church, the foundation of the faith, having for their authors the two Apostles and the two companions of the Apostles, and yet that Polycarp knew nothing of one of these Gospels, the fourth, or did not consider it to be the work of the Apostle John, is incredible. What was formerly without reason denied concerning Justin Martyr is now commonly admitted by the German critics. Hilgenfeld is among those who concede that Justin was acquainted with the Fourth Gospel. Yet even Schürer expresses doubt as to whether it was one of the Apostolic "Memoirs," which are Justin's chief authorities. On this point the argument of Professor Norton, the

substance of which is presented in Professor Ezra Abbot's admirable Essay on the "External Evidence for John's Gospel," is quite convincing. The "Memoirs" of Justin are designated by him just as they are designated by Irenæus. They were composed by Apostles and their companions. They were read on Sunday in the churches in city and country. Irenæus was in the vigor of life when Justin wrote. Yet we are invited to believe that the books referred to by Irenæus as the established authorities are not the same as those described by Justin in almost identical terms, and said by him to be publicly recognized and used. It may be added that the pretension that the Johannine passages in Justin were from the "Gospel of the Hebrews" or some other apocryphal source, is thoroughly confuted in Professor Abbot's Essay.

In speaking of the external proofs of the Johannine authorship, it is worth while to notice how many recent discoveries there have been to add to their force. It was confidently declared that the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies contained no citations from the Fourth Gospel. The concluding portion of that work was discovered, and in it were found passages which are unquestionably from John. The lost work of Hippolytus, the Refutation of all Heresies, was discovered, and the use of the Fourth Gospel by one of the earliest of the Gnostic leaders, Basilides, was proved. That it is Basilides himself who is represented in Hippolytus as quoting and interpreting passages in

John, has been convincingly shown by many writers, and among them by Matthew Arnold. It was stoutly contended that Tatian's Diatessaron was not compounded of the Four Gospels. The work and an ancient commentary upon it are brought to light, and the Diatessaron is found to begin with the opening verse of John. It turns out to be the work which the defenders of the genuineness of the Gospel had affirmed it to be. Even the Didache, or the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, when it is discovered, is seen to contain, in the prayers to be said in connection with the Eucharist, echoes from the closing chapters of John.

In all antiquity there is no lisp of contradiction, no instance of a doubt of the genuineness of the Fourth Gospel, except in the case of the so-called Alogi. The exception is unimportant. They are indirect witnesses against themselves, since they attributed the Gospel to Cerinthus, a contemporary of the Apostle, and thus bear witness to the early date of the work, and by implication to its established, undisputed authority. Irenæus tells us what the opinions of Cerinthus were. He held that Jesus was not born of a virgin, and that after his baptism Christ descended upon him, entering into a temporary union with him. That is to say, Cerinthus held the Gnostic opinion that Jesus is not the Christ (Adv. Hær., I. xxvi. 1). Irenæus assures us that the Apostle John aimed to overthrow the error of Cerinthus (Adv. Hær., III. xi. 1). Opening the Gospel, we find the

motive of the author thus avowed: "that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ." We find that in the Epistle of John this truth is declared to be the criterion of a genuine Christianity. Thus the testimony of Irenæus as to the intent of the Apostle corresponds with the purpose of the writer of the Gospel and the Epistle. That Cerinthus wrote the Gospel, was an absurd hypothesis. It is evident from the paragraph in Irenæus respecting the Alogi that they were moved to their scepticism, not by the existence of any tradition counter to the established belief, nor at the outset by critical difficulties, but by a doctrinal prejudice. Irenæus gives them but a brief notice, — which indicates clearly that they had little importance in his eyes, and had not the slightest influence on his convictions respecting the subject. There is no proof that they were more than a few in number. They had no name, and did not attain to the dignity of a sect. Harnack has shown that if we may trust Epiphanius on this point, they coupled a rejection of the doctrine of the Logos, or Word, with their aversion to the doctrine of the Paraclete. But I cannot think that any importance is to be attached to their opinion respecting the Fourth Gospel. Hippolytus probably opposed them in his lost work on the Gospel of John and the Apocalypse. But Theodotus, whatever connection he may have had with the Alogi, is proved not to have rejected John's Gospel. Those who shared in the temporary aversion to the Apocalypse, and doubted or denied its Apostolic author-

ship, Caius (if he was one of them), Dionysius, and all the rest, accepted the Fourth Gospel as the work of John. The dissent of the handful of Alogi at Thyatira — some of whom, it is not unlikely, made their way to Rome — when the motives of that dissent and the other circumstances are taken into account, seems only to emphasize the unanimity with which the churches and theologians, East and West, recognized the Apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel.

That this Gospel should have been acknowledged by the orthodox and by the Gnostics alike, from the beginning to the end of the great controversy that agitated the Church in the second century, is a marvel indeed, provided it be assumed that it had no Apostolic paternity, but was a work of unknown authorship. The marvel is magnified when it is remembered how unique this Gospel is in its structure and contents, and how strikingly it deviates from the previous established conception of the Lord's history as it stood on the long familiar pages of the Synoptical narratives. Who would have the capacity to compose such a Gospel? What Christian disciple would desire to invent such a narrative? Who would dare to do it among the churches where John's name and teaching were well remembered? If they were not well remembered, the appearance of such a work, late and on a sudden, would be the more startling, and the difficulty of securing for it a hospitable reception would, if possible, be enhanced. On the whole,

the candid student must acknowledge that as far as external proofs of genuineness are concerned, the Fourth Gospel is fully up to the level of the other three. A like attestation in behalf of any of the principal works in classical literature, if it could be obtained, would be considered absolutely decisive.

In connection with the internal evidence respecting the authorship of the Fourth Gospel, the main point, of course, is the credibility of its contents. Since the extreme ground taken by Baur was abandoned, various positions have been assumed by such as do not hold that John wrote the work. Some, as Weisse and Schenkel, have accepted the discourses as genuine, but have considered the narrative matter as more or less unhistorical. Others, like Renan, have taken the reverse position, holding to the history as largely veracious, but rejecting the discourses. It has become more and more clear to candid critics, be their conclusion on the principal question what it may, that the author of the Gospel was not unfamiliar with the events in the life of Jesus, and that he supplies historical facts which are not found in the Synoptics. It is often admitted that a Judæan ministry, such as they do not record, is not in itself improbable. This must be supposed if any satisfactory explanation is to be given of the language of Christ in his lament over Jerusalem, which is set down in the Synoptics, "*How often* would I have gathered thee," etc. Schürer holds that as to the date of the Last Supper, we are not authorized by the evidence to

decide against the Fourth Evangelist. The opinion based on one interpretation of Mark's Gospel, that Jesus did not for a long time disclose himself to his Disciples as the Messiah, has been considered on a previous page. Here it may be observed that the account in John of the attraction of disciples of the Baptist to Jesus, and of this beginning of his work, accords with the probabilities in the case. The particularity of the narrative in John, and its graphic character, are a powerful argument in its favor (John i. 35–43). We are told how John the Baptist directed the attention of two of his disciples to Jesus, how Jesus turned and saw them following him, what was said between them, even what was the hour of the day. This is either a true record of the Apostle John's first acquaintance with Jesus, or somebody's invention. Such a preliminary acquaintance of Jesus with the Disciples explains the seeming abruptness of his call to them, in Galilee, to forsake their employments and to follow him, and their immediate compliance with his request.

The diversity in the type of teaching in the Fourth Gospel from that in the Synoptics coexists with striking points of sympathy and coincidence. The passage (in Matt. xi. 27 *seq.*): "No one knoweth the Son but the Father," etc., is thoroughly in the spirit of the discourses in John. If it be but a single passage, yet its peculiarity is so distinct as to inspire the feeling that there must have been other teaching in the same vein. There are passages in the

discourses in John which occur incidentally, and attest the truthfulness of the record. The words at the end of the fourteenth chapter, "Arise, let us go hence," yield no intelligible meaning unless they are supposed to have been actually spoken by Jesus as he was about to depart from the table. Either he remained for a time, carried away by his interest in his theme, or what follows was uttered on the way towards the Garden.

The linguistic character of the Fourth Gospel is altogether peculiar. The Greek is not like that of other Greek authors. This language was not the writer's vernacular; it was an acquired tongue. The writer was a Hebrew by birth, and in the judgment of so high an authority on this subject as Ewald, was a Palestinian Hebrew. After saying that the author of the Gospel, in the plan of his book and in the way of carrying it out, most evidently shows himself to be like a veritable old Hebrew writer of the higher type, Ewald adds: —

"It is quite worthy of notice that the Greek language of the author carries in it the clearest and strongest marks of a genuine Hebrew who was born in the Holy Land, and in that society grew up without speaking Greek, and who even in the midst of the Greek garb which he learned to wrap about him, still keeps the whole spirit and breath of his mother-tongue, and by it has no scruples in letting himself be guided. The Greek language of our Gospel, to be sure, has not so strong a Hebrew color as that of the older Gospels; it has taken up many genuine Greek traits. But in its real spirit and tone, no style could be

more genuinely Hebrew than our author's. Since he, nevertheless, even in his linguistic peculiarity, has not cast aside his characteristically creative power and movement, there has originated with him a Greek which is peculiar, and has nothing like it elsewhere even among writings which are tinged with the Hebrew. Only the time, the biographical facts, and all the characteristics of the Apostle John can explain the originality of this Greek style."[1]

Ewald goes on to vindicate these statements by special illustrative arguments.[2]

It is thought by some that the author of this Gospel was imbued with the philosophy of Philo. Yet others, of whom Weiss is one, think it quite possible to account for the phenomena on which this opinion is based, without even assuming on the author's part any acquaintance with Alexandrian opinions. Certain it is that the fundamental doctrine of the Gospel, the doctrine of the incarnation of the Logos, is absolutely at variance with the tenets of the Alexandrian school. It must be remembered that a principal source of the conceptions and terms which characterize the theology of Philo was the later books of the Old Testament and the still later

[1] Die Johanneischen Schriften, i. 44.

[2] That the Greek of the Fourth Gospel is not that of an Hellenistic Jew, and how characteristic peculiarities of the Hebrew pervade the book, are illustrated by the late Bishop Lightfoot in his Lecture on the Internal Evidence for the Johannine Authorship, which is published in "The Expositor" for January, February, and March, 1890.

writings of the Apocrypha. If speculations about the Logos, or Word, were "in the air" at the time when John taught at Ephesus, whether the impulse to such discussions proceeded from the school of Philo or not, it was quite natural that the Apostle should take up the term, both to correct incidentally false ideas associated with it, and to make it the vehicle for expressing the true doctrine of Christ as the incarnate Revealer of God, which he had learned from his intercourse with Jesus himself. One of the leading arguments — one of those adduced by Schürer — adverse to the Johannine authorship is the general way in which the author refers to the Jewish religion, and his liberal tone and teaching as regards the privileges and position of the Gentiles in the Church. Now that the theory of the Tübingen school that there was an antagonism of the "pillar Apostles" to Paul and to his liberal course in laying no yoke of ordinances on the Gentile converts, has broken down and been pretty generally given up, the objection to which we here advert has lost much of its force. The Apostle Paul, as early as when he wrote his Epistle to the Galatians, could speak of "the Jews' religion" (i. 13, 14). Near the close of the century, decades of years after the temple had been laid in ruins, and after John had lived so long in the midst of Gentile churches, what difficulty is there in supposing him to have attained to a clear consciousness of the universal intent and spirit of the Gospel, and to

a full appreciation of the purport of this part of the Master's teaching?

It is not to be denied that the Fourth Gospel is tinged throughout with the subjective peculiarity of the author. It is all — narrative and discourses — bathed in his spirit. The style is the same from beginning to end. The influence of the subjective element may be overstated. This, as I cannot but think, has been done by Weiss in his instructive and interesting "Life of Jesus." But that a subjective element is there, and has its influence, an attentive study of the Gospel leaves no room to doubt.

Why not, then, it may be asked, solve the problem and get rid of all perplexities at one stroke, by assuming, as many at present are inclined to assume, that the Gospel was composed by a disciple, or by disciples, of the Apostle John, on the basis of recollections of his teachings? There are several strong objections in the way of this theory. In the first place, the writer claims to be an eye-witness. This is asserted at the beginning (i. 14); it is re-affirmed at the outset of the First Epistle, which is undeniably from the same pen. Secondly, we have the attestation of the Disciples at the end of the book; and this attestation declares that the witness to what is recorded in it "WROTE these things" (John xxi. 24). Thirdly, the omission of the author of the Gospel to give his name, and the avoiding of any mention of the name of the Apostle John — the

pains taken to avoid it — are capable of no satisfactory explanation except one; namely, that John himself, in a spirit of modesty, chooses thus to veil himself. If his Disciples were the writers, why all this delicacy and resort to circumlocution? Fourthly, the Gospel is an outpouring of personal experience. The book is a unit. It was composed, as Neander said, "at one cast." The conception of it as a conglomerate made of pieces picked up from the Synoptics or other sources, hardly deserves consideration. It is born, and not made, and is warm with the pulses of life. The point is that the book is a profession of faith, and, more than this, a fervent, loving relation of the way in which faith arose and established itself in the author's heart, through personal intercourse and contact with Jesus. These considerations appear to present insuperable difficulties in the way of the theory that not John himself, but his followers or associates, wrote the Gospel.

II.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE CHARACTER OF THE GOSPEL HISTORIES.

What the true character of the Gospels is, and how to study them, may be illustrated by looking attentively at certain passages in them and comparing these passages with one another. It is assumed that the reader approaches the inquiry without any disposition to find discrepancies, and, on the other hand, with no preconceived theory which forbids them to be admitted, in case they appear to exist. That is to say, we take up the narratives just as we should the writings of other historians or biographers whose intention to relate facts we have no occasion to distrust.

Let the first example be the accounts given of the baptism of Jesus. This is an event which John does not directly record. He quotes, however, a reference to it which was made by John the Baptist. That the Baptist refers to that event, there is no reason to doubt, notwithstanding that Baur and some others have imagined that the author of the Fourth Gospel did not design his hearers to infer that Jesus was baptized by the Forerunner: —

Matt. iii. 13–17.	Mark i. 9–11.	Luke iii. 21–23.	John i. 19–34.
(13) Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. (14) But John would have hindered him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? (15) But Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. (16) Then he sufferet h him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him; (17) and lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.	(9) And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan. (10) And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him: (11) and a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.	(21) Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that, Jesus also having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, (22) and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon him, and a voice came out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.	(31) And I knew him not; but that he should be made manifest to Israel, for this cause came I baptizing with water. (32) And John bare witness, saying, I have beheld the spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon him. (33) and I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, he said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. (34) And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.

The circumstance that John at first shrunk from baptizing Jesus, is recorded by Matthew alone. Such critics as Strauss and Keim find a contradiction here with the statement in the Fourth Gospel, "I knew him not," etc. But this does not exclude a personal acquaintance with Jesus, and perhaps a surmise that he was the Promised One. "I knew him not," in John's narrative, means 'recognized him not as the Messiah.' But the words spoken, as given in Mark and Luke, are addressed directly to Jesus: "Thou art," etc. In Matthew, he is in the third person:

"This is my beloved Son," etc. Here is a disagreement. No doubt each evangelist meant to give the words in the exact form. The accounts on which they depended varied. In the Fourth Gospel, the manifestation is for John's instruction. The same interpretation is suggested by the form of words in Matthew. In Mark it is said that "he" — that is, Jesus — "saw the heavens rent asunder," etc. But neither Mark's account nor Luke's is in the least inconsistent with the supposition that John, as well as Jesus, observed the miraculous phenomena. Keim, usually disposed to rule out the miraculous facts in the Gospels, finds in the solemn and momentous transaction between the Prophet and Jesus on the bank of the Jordan, something truly supernatural.

The discrepancy in the record of the words spoken from heaven at the baptism of Jesus has many parallels in the Gospel histories. A familiar instance is that of the inscription on the cross: —

Matt. xxvii. 37.	Mark xv. 26.	Luke xxiii. 38.	John xix. 19.
And they set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.	And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.	And there was also a superscription over him, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.	(19) And Pilate wrote a title also, and put it on the cross. And there was written, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

In the Authorized Version, Luke is made to say that the superscription was "in letters of Greek and Latin and Hebrew." These words, which were probably inserted in the text of Luke from John's Gospel, are left out in the Revised Version. The variations in the form of the inscription are seen at a glance.

They point to different sources of information. One harmonistic suggestion is that the inscription was not the same in the three languages. This of course is possible, but not probable.

Another familiar example of discrepancies, trifling in their nature, is in the accounts of the sending out of the Twelve: —

Matt x. 10.	Mark vi. 8.	Luke ix. 3, 4.
Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; (10) no wallet for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff: for the labourer is worthy of his food.	(8) And he charged them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no bread, no wallet, no money in their purse; but to go shod with sandals: and, said he, put not on two coats.	(3) And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staff, nor wallet, nor bread, nor money; (4) neither have two coats.

Mark describes the Disciples as going forth with nothing in their hands but a pilgrim's staff. In Matthew and Luke, they are to take not even a staff. The idea in all is that they are to go out unprovided, and to depend wholly on charity.

Our next illustration is drawn from the accounts of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew and Luke. It is often doubted whether in Luke (vi. 20–49) we have not another discourse distinct from that given in Matthew. But the identity of the two discourses is proved by the similarity of the contents. Both end with the parable of the house built on a rock. The identity is proved also by the chronological landmark, the healing of the Centurion's servant, which immediately follows in both Evangelists. That we have two accounts of one and the same discourse is the accepted view of the great majority of critics. It

is true that Matthew associates with the Sermon on the Mount passages from teaching of Jesus which belongs chronologically in other connections. Much of it is placed elsewhere in Luke; in some instances in conjunction with circumstances evidently more appropriate. This is true, for example, of the Lord's Prayer. The particular theme of Jesus in Matthew (vi. 5 *seq.*) is not prayer in general, but hypocrisy in prayer. But in Luke we are told that on a certain occasion he was praying, and one of his Disciples made the request: "Teach us to pray, even as John taught his disciples." Thereupon Jesus gave them the Lord's Prayer. The request would be strange if this prayer had been given before. In case it had been given before, Jesus in his answer would most likely have reminded them of it.

In comparing the two reports of the discourse of Jesus, the first inquiry relates to the place and the audience. Luke says that it came to pass "in these days" — he has apparently no means of fixing the time more definitely — "that Jesus went out into the mountain to pray." He continued in prayer through the night. In the morning he called "his disciples," — those who accepted his teaching. The fact is thus stated by Mark (iii. 13): "He goeth into the mountain and calleth unto him whom he himself would." Then follows, according to Luke, (and Mark also) the choice of the Twelve. Then Jesus descended, Luke proceeds to say, and stood on "a level place." By "the mountain" in Mark we

may understand the mountainous country over the Lake of Gennesaret, since the Evangelist had just spoken of the seaside, and explained that on account of the throng Jesus had been obliged to address them from a boat. But as Luke has made no mention of the seaside, and as he tells us that Jesus "came down" from the mountain, he may perhaps, have meant by this term a high point, or summit. There is no reason, therefore, why we may not suppose the "level place" to have been a plateau to which Jesus descended from a higher elevation. With him, on the broad level, were not only the Twelve, but also, Luke adds, a "multitude of his disciples," and a "great number of people" besides. Jesus, directing his attention to his Disciples, began his address. Turning now from Luke to Matthew, we find no mention of the choice, or setting apart, of the Twelve; but later in the Gospel, such an act of Jesus is assumed to have taken place. Prior to the record of the Sermon on the Mount we have in Matthew only an account of the selection of four as followers: Peter and Andrew, James and John (Matt. iv. 18–23). As an introduction to the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew acquaints us with the fact that, drawn by his teaching and his miracles, there followed him great multitudes (iv. 25). "Seeing the multitudes, he went up into the mountain. And when he had sat down, his disciples came unto him." We should infer at the first glance that it was to escape the throng and to be with "the disciples" apart, that he chose to

retire to the mountain. But it is obvious from the discourse which follows that his audience was composed not only of Disciples in the broader sense, but of many others besides. When he finished, "*the multitudes* were astonished at his teaching." With Tholuck we may imagine that near to him were gathered his believing adherents, while the outer circle was made up of a more miscellaneous throng.

When we look at the two reports of this discourse, or at the portion of it which Luke presents when compared with the corresponding portion in Matthew, some striking diversities at once appear.

Matt. v. 2–6.	Luke vi. 20–22, 25, 26.
(2) And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying,	(20) And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed are ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. (21) Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.
(3) Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.	
(4) Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.	
(5) Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.	
(6) Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.	But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. (25) Woe unto you, ye that are full now! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you, ye that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

In Matthew the class specified who are to be blessed are those who have a sense of spiritual need, and who are afflicted with hunger of soul, with a longing to be righteous. In Luke, it is those who are poor and lack food, in the literal sense of the words. The meaning in Luke is made clear by the added woes,

which are wanting in Matthew: "Woe unto you that are rich," etc. We may defer for the moment the question what sense consonant with the general teaching of Christ may be attached to the expressions in Luke. We have first to inquire what Jesus really said. It is evident that we have to decide between the report in Matthew and that in Luke. Jesus could not have made those diverse utterances in the same breath. Some expositors, of whom Godet is one, still think that Luke is here the more exact. They imagine Jesus to have looked on the gathering before him, made up of the poor, whose outward condition had caused them to feel a poverty of spirit and a spiritual need. He pronounced them blessed even in their destitution and on account of it. This yields a not unacceptable meaning to the words in Luke, and a meaning consistent with the spirit of Christ's teaching elsewhere. Yet there are decisive grounds for the conclusion that the form of the Beatitudes as we find it in Matthew is the correct one. This is the conclusion of the majority of the more judicious critics, including Meyer and Weiss. The opposite view is maintained by Pfleiderer and Holtzmann, but has been confuted by no one more satisfactorily than by Weizsäcker. The discourse in Matthew has a distinct subject. It presents the new law — the Christian ideal of righteousness — in contrast with more external and lower standards such as had existed in the past and such as made up the moral code of Pharisaism. It thus begins with the tempers

of heart which qualify one for the blessings of the new kingdom. The discourse in Luke bears marks of having been drawn from a less complete, fragmentary report or record of it. At the sixth verse it is said: "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies," etc. Here is the adversative "but," without what precedes it in Matthew: "Ye have heard that it was said," etc. Verses 39 and 40, relating to blind guides and to the disciple not being above his Master, are brought in, breaking the connection of thought. The first of these sayings is found in Matthew xv. 14, and the second in Matthew x. 24, — each in an appropriate setting. The transition (Luke vi. 46, 47) to the parable of the house built on the rock, will be felt to be quite abrupt when it is compared with the way in which Matthew's report leads up to this parable.

The Church in all ages has not erred in taking the Sermon on the Mount as it stands in Matthew — apart from the additional teachings grouped with it — as the Magna Charta of the Messiah's community. It is the law given, to quote Ewald's language, from "the new Sinai."

How shall we account for the variations in Luke? That Luke had in his hands the Logia of the Apostle Matthew, and himself changed the form of the Beatitudes, is a gratuitous and unsupported assumption. It is claimed that Luke favored an Ebionite opinion that looked on the possession of property as a sin. But his writings contain no proof of this imputation.

If Zaccheus gave one half of his wealth to the poor, one half he was allowed without censure to retain. It was the difference in character between Dives and Lazarus, and not the unlikeness in their earthly condition, that determined the lot of each at the end of life. There is no Ebionitism in the Beatitudes as they are given in Luke, since, as Weiss remarks, "the poor are the believing disciples of Jesus, and as such are blessed." The real purport of them is in essential consonance with various recorded, and not unlikely with many unrecorded, utterances of Jesus. No doubt Luke followed an authority less full and correct than the Logia of Matthew. Probably it was the same Logia in an abridged and altered form, or, if not the Logia, some other written record in which teachings of Christ were brought together. In a number of passages in Luke it is evident that his source of information respecting the words of Christ is not on a level with that at the basis of Matthew. The following is the Lord's Prayer as it is found in the two authors respectively: —

Matt. vi. 9–13.

(9) After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. (10) Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. (11) Give us this day our daily bread. (12) And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. (13) And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Luke xi. 2–4.

(2) And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Father, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. (3) Give us day by day our daily bread. (4) And forgive us our sins; for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And bring us not into temptation.

The translation from Luke above is from the corrected Greek text. In the text at the basis of the Authorized Version are words and clauses which had been introduced into it from Matthew. It is not to be supposed that Luke erased anything from the Lord's Prayer as it stood in the source from which he derived it. The reasons for giving the preference to the form in Matthew as the most authentic are of the same tenor as those already assigned in reference to the Beatitudes. Hence we conclude that Luke in this instance likewise was guided by an authority distinct and less exact.

In conjunction with the record of the Sermon on the Mount both Matthew and Luke narrate the miracle wrought in answer to the request of the Centurion.

Matt. viii. 5–13.

(5) And when he was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, and saying, (6) Lord, my servant lieth in the house sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. (7) And he saith unto him, I will come and heal him. (8) And the centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed. (9) For I also am a man under authority, having under myself soldiers: and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth; and to another,

Luke vii. 2–10.

(2) And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and at the point of death. (3) And when he heard concerning Jesus, he sent unto him elders of the Jews, asking him that he would come and save his servant. (4) And they, when they came to Jesus, besought him earnestly, saying, He is worthy that thou shouldest do this for him: (5) for he loveth our nation, and himself built us our synagogue. (6) And Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him,

Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. (10) And when Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. (11) And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: (12) but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. (13) And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And the servant was healed in that hour.

saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: (7) wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say the word, and my servant shall be healed. (8) For I also am a man set under authority, having under myself soldiers: and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. (9) And when Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned and said unto the multitude that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. (10) And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole.

In Matthew, it is the Centurion in person, and he alone, who applies to Jesus. In Luke, it is first the Jewish elders who come in the Centurion's behalf, and then, later, his friends. It was they who, returning to the house, found the servant whole. Luke's account is more fresh, and has an air of originality as if it were derived from an immediate source. In the tradition at the basis of Matthew's account the occurrence had been thrown into a briefer form, and altered in the process of shortening it. By some scholars, ancient and modern, the healing of the nobleman's son (John iv. 46–53) has been thought to be identical with the miracle wrought for the Centurion. It is thus spoken of by Irenæus. Such

is now the opinion of Neander, Weiss, and others. But the diversity in the circumstances renders this conclusion questionable. The characteristic feature of the Centurion's saying, that Jesus had no need to come to the house, does not appear in John's narration, which reads as follows: —

There was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. (47) When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judæa into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son; for he was at the point of death. (48) Jesus therefore said unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe. (49) The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. (50) Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. The man believed the word that Jesus spake unto him, and he went his way. (51) And as he was now going down, his servants met him, saying, that his son lived. (52) So he inquired of them the hour when he began to amend. They said therefore unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. (53) So the father knew that it was at that hour in which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

All critical students of the New Testament are aware of an apparent or real discrepancy between the Synoptical Gospels and the Gospel of John respecting the date of the Last Supper. The Synoptical Gospels, with one accord, place it at the usual time of the Passover meal, — the evening of the 14th Nisan, or, according to the Jewish reckoning, the beginning of the 15th Nisan. Mark says: "On the first day of unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the passover, his disciples say unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and make ready that thou mayest eat the passover?" In this designation of time the three Gospels agree. But John

(xiii. 1) begins his account of the last meal taken by Christ with his Disciples, with the words: "Now before the feast of the passover," — words which must be connected with the principal statement that follows, "he loved them to the end." This statement, many critics allege, is to guard against the idea that it was the Passover meal, and to indicate that it was a repast on the previous day. The phrases, "during supper" (not *the* Supper), and "riseth from supper," soon occur (verses 2, 4). After a time, in the course of the meal, Judas retired from the room. Some thought that he had been directed to make provision "for the feast," — where the article occurs (verse 29). In John xix. 14, the day of the crucifixion is called "the preparation of the passover," — as if it were the morning before. Saturday is styled (xix. 31) "a high day," which would be natural if it were at once the Sabbath and the Passover. Finally, on Friday morning the Jews would not enter the palace of Pilate, "that they might not be defiled, but might eat the passover." Other explanations, more or less plausible, are suggested for several of the preceding passages. This reference to a fear of defilement, with the reason assigned, it is certainly very difficult, if it be possible, to account for, in case the Passover supper had already been eaten. It is the conclusion, therefore, of a large number of eminent critics of every school of theology that, according to John, the repast of Jesus with his Disciples was on the evening before

the Passover meal; that is, that the Thursday evening of that week was the 13th, or, according to the Jewish reckoning, the 14th of Nisan. Among these critics are Neander, Bleek, Meyer, Weiss, Ellicott, Westcott. Canon Westcott, in his Commentary on John, says of the acts and discourses which begin with John xiii.: "All these took place 'before the feast,' that is, on the evening (the commencement) of Nisan 13th; and in these last scenes before the Passover, at which the Jewish type found its perfect fulfilment, the love of the Lord was revealed in its highest form." Westcott remarks on the 29th verse: "These words show that the meal cannot have been the Passover. Moreover, if it had been, Judas would not have left while the meal was as yet unfinished." Critics who adopt this opinion find even in the first three Gospels incidental corroboration of it, in the passages which indicate that the day of crucifixion was a day when labor and intercourse were going on as usual (Matt. xxvii. 59 *seq.;* Mark xv. 21, 42, 46; Luke xxiii. 26, 54, 56). Simon, who bore the cross, was coming in from "the country," — apparently from labor in the field. Occupations are referred to which it is hardly probable would be allowed on a day so solemn as the first day of the Passover.

On the supposition that John is correctly interpreted by the scholars to whom reference has just been made, — and it must be admitted that their view is coming to prevail, — there is a discrepancy

between John and the Synoptists. We have then to conclude that John purposely rectifies a mistake which had made its way into the Galilean tradition. Such a mistake is less surprising if it be supposed that this portion of the narrative in the Greek Matthew, as well as in Luke, was drawn from Mark, or that all three authors here represent one source. It was understood by all that the crucifixion took place in conjunction with the Passover, when the multitudes were gathered for the festival. The Last Supper took on to some extent, by anticipation, the character of the Paschal Supper, as appears in the accounts of the institution of the Eucharist.

An interesting illustration of the character of the Gospel histories is presented in the accounts given of the interviews of Jesus with his Disciples after his resurrection. It is impossible to dovetail strictly these narratives with one another; but their peculiarities are just those which add credibility to the main facts. We turn first to the oldest of the Gospel narratives. The last twelve verses in Mark are not a part of the original text. This passage contains extracts from Luke and from John, and was composed, it appears probable, to fill out the seemingly incomplete narrative of Mark. At the outset the reader should be reminded that all the Gospels record the visit to the sepulchre made by women near the dawn of the third day.

Matt. xxviii. 1.	Mark xvi. 1-2.	Luke xxiv. 1, 10.	John xx. 1.
Now late on the sabbath day, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.	(1) And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, that they might come and anoint him. (2) And very early on the first day of the week, they come to the tomb when the sun was risen.	(1) And on the sabbath they rested according to the commandment. But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came unto the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared. (10) Now they were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James: and the other women with them told these things unto the apostles.	Now on the first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, while it was yet dark, unto the tomb, and seeth the stone taken away from the tomb.

In Mark (xiv. 27, 28) we find the words of Jesus: "All ye shall be offended: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered abroad. Howbeit, after I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee." And the same Evangelist states that the angel in the sepulchre said to the women: "Go, tell his disciples and Peter, He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you." Here (with only the addition of a single verse relating to the women, which will soon be noticed) Mark breaks off his account. Possibly he intended to pursue it in a distinct writing; but on this point we have no information. The concluding statement of Mark is that the women, frightened, fled from the tomb, and that "they said nothing to any one; for they were afraid." Something occurred; but here the curtain drops on the narrative. Luke relates that the women "told these things to the

eleven and to all the rest." Matthew says (xxviii. 8) that the women departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring his Disciples word. They met Jesus, who gave them this message: "Go tell my brethren that they depart into Galilee, and there shall they see me;" and then (verse 16) it is said that the eleven Disciples went into Galilee "unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them." There they met him. With regard to all occurrences of a very startling nature, testimony is almost sure to vary. Often there are circumstances which, if known, might serve to remove apparent discrepancies. But it is also true that real inconsistencies are apt to be found among the different witnesses, and especially in the reports that spread abroad from them. While, therefore, the suggestions of harmonists are in some cases of value, it is better frankly to recognize that such inconsistencies exist than to resort to artificial methods of conciliation. Just now the principal thing to be remarked is that from Mark and Matthew alone we should know nothing of interviews with the risen Jesus — except the notice in Matthew of his meeting the women — in Jerusalem. The scene is shifted at once to Galilee. But if the opinion now coming to prevail among scholars is correct, that the *narrative* portion of our Greek Matthew is borrowed largely from Mark, with something in the way of supplement from other sources, the difficulty is confined to this one Evangelist, himself not an Apostle, who

presents, especially in this part of his writing, a summary, rapid and abbreviated, and whose accounts in general cover the events of which Galilee was the theatre. If it be granted that one tradition placed the interviews — at least the first of them — in Galilee, and that this tradition is found in Mark, the evidence from other sources is ample and convincing that it was in Jerusalem that the risen Jesus first met the Apostles. The theory of Weizsäcker, therefore, that in Mark we have the earliest tradition, and that our other accounts are a growth upon it, is untenable. This evidence we have now briefly to notice. It consists mainly of the testimony of the Apostle Paul in connection with Luke's narrative and the narrative in John's Gospel.

Paul wrote the First Epistle to the Corinthians in 57 or 58. His conversion was in 34 or 35, a little more than twenty years before, and his first visit to Jerusalem, when he stayed a fortnight with Peter, was in 37 or 38. He had had ample means of intercourse with the other Apostles and many immediate disciples of Jesus. In considering what he has to say in respect to the fact of the resurrection of Jesus, we must remember the stress which he laid on this fact as the corner-stone of the Christian's creed. He enumerates a succession of interviews of the risen Jesus with the Apostles. There is no reason to suppose that he intended to present an exhaustive list of these interviews with the Apostles,

much less with the Disciples generally. The passage to be quoted is in 1 Cor. xv. 3–8.

(3) For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; (4) and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures; (5) and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; (6) then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; (7) then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; (8) and last of all, as unto one born out of due time, he appeared to me also.

That these manifestations of Jesus (with the possible exception of the appearance to the five hundred) were at Jerusalem, and that this was the understanding of Paul, is settled by a recurrence to the Third Gospel. Its author had consulted "eye-witnesses" (i. 1), and endeavored "to trace all things accurately from the first." Moreover, he stood in close relations to the Apostle Paul in the later period of his ministry. The first manifestation of Jesus, in the series as given by Paul, was to Peter: "he appeared unto Cephas." Now in Luke (xxiv. 34), when Cleopas and his fellow-disciple, on Sunday, after meeting Jesus on their walk to Emmaus, came back to Jerusalen to tell the Eleven, who were gathered together, other Disciples being with them, what had occurred, they were met with the exclamation, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." "And as they spoke these things, he [Jesus] himself stood in the midst of them." There is no effort here to give prominence to the appearance to Peter; no details are given. The circumstance is introduced in this indirect way.

Before, Luke had said (verses 11, 12) that the report of the women on coming from the sepulchre had struck the Apostles as idle talk. Peter, however, had gone and looked into the tomb, and had "departed to his home, wondering at that which had come to pass."

Of this visit of Peter to the sepulchre, and how he was accompanied by John, we have a clear and graphic account in the Fourth Gospel (John xx. 1–10).

(1) Now on the first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, while it was yet dark, unto the tomb, and seeth the stone taken away from the tomb. (2) She runneth therefore, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we know not where they have laid him. (3) Peter therefore went forth, and the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb. (4) And they ran both together: and the other disciple outran Peter, and came first to the tomb; (5) and stooping and looking in, he seeth the linen cloths lying; yet entered he not in. (6) Simon Peter therefore also cometh, following him, and entered into the tomb; and he beholdeth the linen cloths lying, (7) and the napkin, that was upon his head, not lying with the linen cloths, but rolled up in a place by itself. (8) Then entered in therefore the other disciple also, which came first to the tomb, and he saw and believed. (9) For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. (10) So the disciples went away again unto their own home.

Those who believe that we have here, and in the passages which follow, what the Apostle John wrote, will not doubt that the first manifestations of Jesus, whatever idea is entertained of the nature of them, were at Jerusalem. In the twenty-first chapter of the Fourth Gospel, which is an appendix, but probably from the writer of the preceding chapters, we

have a record of the appearance of Jesus to the Disciples in Galilee. But even those who question the apostolic authorship of this Gospel, and attribute it to a Disciple of John, cannot consistently doubt that enough of its contents was derived from John himself to assure us that Jerusalem was the place of the first manifestations of the risen Christ to the Apostles. We know that they did not forsake Jerusalem at the crucifixion. All accounts concur in regard to the fact that they were there on the third day. It is beyond all question that it was on the third day that the first appearance of Jesus, take what view of it one will, occurred. That the subsequent appearances to which the Apostle Paul refers, most or all of them, were likewise at Jerusalem, is established by an impartial examination and comparison of all the evidence on the subject.

Sceptical criticism will have to give up the theory of "the growth of a legend" of the resurrection from insignificant beginnings. If the Third and the Fourth Gospels were not in the way, it would be absolutely disproved by the unimpeached testimony of the Apostle Paul. The fact is incontrovertible, nor is it questioned, that the Apostles believed in the reality of the Lord's re-appearance and intercourse with them on successive occasions, beginning with the memorable "third day," — believed in it with an unmovable faith, a faith which derision and obloquy, persecution and death, availed not in the least to disturb. It is not designed here to examine at length

the "vision theory," which, it is alleged, serves to account for the belief of the Apostles that Jesus had risen from the tomb, and for their testimony on this subject. The purpose here has not been to vindicate the character of the proofs furnished by them, but to show that they gave this testimony.[1]

[1] For a consideration of the "vision hypothesis" and a more extended discussion of the various topics falling under the head of Christian Evidences, I must refer the reader to my work on "The Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief" (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1883).

III.

THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS ON THE TIME OF THE SECOND ADVENT.

The Jews distinguished between the present Age, or Period, and the Age, or Period, to come, — thus dividing the world's history into two parts. The first section is the pre-Messianic, the second is the post-Messianic, era. In the New Testament, "this World" and "the World to come" are the designation of these respective eras. Sometimes the division line was placed by the Jews at the *beginning* of the Messianic time, and sometimes at its *close*, at the Judgment. This last view was the more common in the later Jewish theology. In the New Testament, the coming Era, "the World to come," is introduced by the Second Advent of Christ to Judgment. In the current Jewish theology there was no room for a *second* Advent. The rejection of Christ, his death and his resurrection, are the presupposition of the Christian conceptions on this subject. The work of the Messiah was left unfinished. The basis of the New Testament doctrine is the intimations or more explicit words of Christ, before and after his death and resurrection. The Second Advent is represented as the transition-point, the termination of the present

order of things. The Coming of the Lord is conceived of as a definite event, to occur at a point of time in the future. It is called the "Parousia." The term Parousia, in connection with this subject and as related to Christ, always denotes his Second Advent in the character of Judge, and the introduction of his kingdom in its full victory and dominion.

1. There runs through the New Testament the expectation that the Parousia, as thus defined, is near. It is variously described as a coming "in his glory," a coming "in the glory of his Father," a coming "in his kingdom," a coming "with his angels," as the "revelation" or "manifestation" of the Son of Man, etc. It is spoken of as the "day" of the Lord (Luke xvii. 24), as "that day" (Luke xxi. 24), as "the end of the world," or, as Luke xxiv. 3 is rendered in the margin of the Revised Version, "the consummation of the Age," — the existing period and present order of things. These descriptive phrases, or many of them, are found in the contemporary Jewish theology.

"The day of the Lord" is a conception familiar to the Old Testament Prophets. Jehovah would surely come to deliver his people from oppression and trouble. He would come, in his character as sovereign of the world, to make his power and mercy known. The day of the Lord would bring blessings to Israel, and discomfiture and ruin to Israel's enemies. But in Israel there would be a sifting, a judgment, a parting of the righteous from the unfaithful. The

heathen nations would be overtaken with retribution. They would be subjugated, and would serve Judah. Then again it was prophesied that they would be won over, recovered from idolatry, unite with Jehovah's people in his worship. Then would ensue an era of universal righteousness and peace. The precise complexion of the predictions varied with the state of the times and the situation of the prophet. In depicting the sublimity and terror of "the day of the Lord," the boldest poetic imagery was employed. The earth would be shaken, the heavens would be convulsed, the light of the stars and of the sun would be blotted out. For example, Isaiah (ch. xiii.) thus speaks of the day of the Lord which is to destroy Babylon, and in like manner (ch. xxiv.) dwells on the destruction that is to overtake Jerusalem. But in both passages it is not a single mighty city alone, but the world, on which the judgments of the Lord are to descend. Joel, one of the last of the Prophets, speaks thus (ch. ii.): "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come." In Jerusalem a remnant is to escape. The nations shall be assembled and judged. "The sun and moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining." After that, Judah and Jerusalem are to be filled with holiness and prosperity. The references in the Prophets to the wonders in nature in connection with "the day of the Lord" cannot be regarded as being, in the intention of the Prophets, simply the

language of poetic description. According as the visions of prophecy became more definite, it was understood that the great deliverance and judgment were to be effected through the agency of the Messiah. Hope, alternating more or less with fear, centred in the expected coming of the Christ.

In the New Testament, under whatever terms the Parousia — the Coming of the ascended Christ — is referred to, the implication is that it is near at hand. In the first three Gospels it is said that "this generation shall not pass away" before it will occur. The phrase translated "this generation" denotes in the New Testament, like the corresponding English phrase, the average length of human life. With the Greeks it signified a third of a century. In Matthew, after the prediction of the fall of Jerusalem, with its attendant miseries, we read that "immediately" after the tribulation of those days will occur the Advent of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven (Matt. xxiv. 29). Luke speaks of the avenging of the elect, when the Son of Man "cometh," as to occur "speedily" (Luke xviii. 8, 9). In John's Gospel we see that the expectation among "the brethren" was that John would live until the Return of Christ (John i. 21–23). In the First Epistle of John (ii. 18) it is inferred, from the appearance of Antichrists, that "it is the last hour," — which appears from the context to mean the same as "the last day" in his Gospel; that is, the Advent. Paul repeatedly adverts to the Second Coming as near. In

the First Epistle to the Thessalonians (iv. 16, 17, and the following chapter) he speaks of it in such a way that the Thessalonian Christians were thrown into a commotion. In his Second Epistle he seeks to calm the excitement. They are not to think that "the day of the Lord is now present" (ii. 2); something is to precede it. Yet there is still the intimation that the Advent is not far off; for the Apostle explains that "the mystery of lawlessness doth already work;" the precursor of the Advent is already beginning to be manifest. In one of his latest Epistles — the Epistles to the Thessalonians are the earliest — the Apostle says: "The Lord is at hand" (Phil. iv. 5). On this passage Bishop Lightfoot remarks: "The nearness of the Lord's advent is assigned as a reason for patient forbearance. So similarly in St. James v. 8 ["for the coming of the Lord is at hand"]. The expression, ὁ κύριος ἐγγύς ["the Lord is at hand"], is the Apostle's watchword. In 1 Cor. xvi. 22, an Aramaic equivalent is given, *Μαρὰν ἀθά* [*Maran atha;* in the margin of the Revised Version, "The Lord cometh"]; whence we may infer that it was a familiar form of mutual recognition and warning in the early Church. Compare Barnabas, § 21. . . . See also Luke xxi. 31; 1 Peter iv. 7." "The end of all things is at hand," is the language of Peter. The same Apostle sees in the occurrences at Pentecost what Joel had foretold was to precede "the day of the Lord," "that great and notable day" (Acts ii. 20). "Ye see the day draw-

ing nigh," writes the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (x. 25). "For yet a very little while," he adds, — quoting Isaiah, as rendered in the Septuagint, "He that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry." Jude reminds his readers, with respect to the revilers and scoffers about them, of what the Apostles had said, that "in the last time" — that is, in the closing days of the ante-Messianic era — "there shall be mockers."[1] These quotations suffice to show what

[1] Either the author of 2 Peter made use of Jude, or Jude made use of 2 Peter. The priority probably belongs to Jude. The Apostolic authorship of 2 Peter is extensively questioned in the modern, as it was in the ancient Church. This question need not be examined here. When it was written, there were mockers who scoffed at the expectation of the Parousia (iii. 3 *seq.*). "Where," they said, "is the promise of his coming?" what has come of it? The writer answers, first, that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." That is to say, "distinctions of long and short time are nothing in the sight of God; delay is a purely human conception." And secondly, the writer accounts for the postponing of the Parousia by the "long-suffering" of God, who is not willing that any should perish.

The authorship of the Book of Revelation is now, as it was in the third and fourth centuries and at the period of the Reformation, a controverted question. On many points, how to interpret it, is now, as of old, unsettled. On the particular topic before us, it cannot be denied that the imminence of the Parousia appears to be indicated. The Revelation relates "to things shortly to come to pass" (i. 1). "The time" — is it not the time of the Parousia? — "is at hand" (i. 3; xxii. 10). Immediately following a reference to "the hour of trial" to come upon "the whole world," and just before the reference to the New Jerusalem, are the words, "I come quickly." This expression is three times

was the expectation, as to the time of the Advent, in the minds of the New Testament writers.

Among the other passages which bear on this subject, there are some to the interpretation of which a degree of doubt may be attached. The attention of the reader is invited to the following citations from the First Gospel: —

Matt. x. 23.	Matt. xvi. 27, 28.	Matt. xxiv. 13, 14.
But when they persecute you in this city, flee into the next: for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.	(27) For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds. (28) Verily I say unto you, There be some of them that stand here, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.	(13) But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved. (14) And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come.

repeated in the last chapter (xxii. 7, 12, 20). In the first of these instances, the words, "And behold, I come quickly," stand in the closest connection with another reference to "the things that must shortly come to pass," — the contents of the revelation made by the angel. Among the commentators, two explanations are frequent. By one school it is said that God's mode of reckoning time does not accord with man's; that is, the interval before the Parousia is short to him, but long to us. By the other school, among whom Moses Stuart is included, "the things shortly to come to pass" embrace most of the events depicted in the book, but *not* the Parousia. The *beginning* of the fulfilment of the prophecies was near. The difficulty with the first view is that language is designed to be understood by those to whom it is addressed; otherwise it conveys no idea to them. The difficulty with the second view is that the Parousia, although it was only one of the events foretold, was yet the most grand and important of them all.

The first of the foregoing passages is from the instructions of Jesus to the Apostles when he sent them forth on their preliminary mission. Matthew, in accordance with his custom of grouping together utterances of Jesus on a particular theme, has apparently gathered into this discourse of the Master sayings which formed a part of their final commission. But what does the Coming here signify? It was to be, it would appear, a means of deliverance for the Apostles from further peril. The Lord would come before they should have gone through the Jewish cities, and thus no places would be left for them to flee to. But the second passage appears to presuppose a longer interval before the coming is to occur. Some of the bystanders, but only a fraction of them, would live to see it. In the third passage the interval would seem to be still longer. The Gospel is first to be preached everywhere. Meyer and Weiss are among the exegetes who consider that in all these passages it is requisite to understand a reference to the Parousia. They hold that in each case the context makes this reference clear, and excludes every other. All three passages, as these critics judge, imply the belief that the Parousia was near, but disclose also the varying expectation as to the length of the interval that was to elapse before it should occur. But there are scholars whose opinion is entitled to respect, of whom Neander is one, who are inclined to give a more figurative interpretation to the first of the three passages. They would make it

a promise of the increase of the power of Christ and of the spread of his kingdom. The destruction of Jerusalem was too far in the future to be the event referred to in the prediction. So there are still left critics who are of opinion that the closing verses in both the second and third of the passages quoted above may refer to something else than the Parousia. The differences of judgment in regard to the sense of these particular passages, and of others that might be named, do not disturb the general conclusion which has been propounded above, — that the New Testament writers look forward to the Parousia as an event in the near future.

How are we to account for this expectation of the Apostles and other New Testament writers that the Lord would soon appear in visible majesty? What led them to look for the Parousia at so early a day? To answer the question it is requisite to attend to the Prophetic Discourse recorded in the twenty-fourth of Matthew and in the other Synoptics. In that discourse the Second Advent stands in close connection chronologically with the destruction of Jerusalem.

(1) There is the explanation founded on what is called "the perspective of prophecy." This theory is thus described by Bengel: "Prophecy is like the picture of some region, which in the foreground sets down distinctly roofs and paths and bridges, but in the background crowds together valleys and mountains of wide extent." That this character belongs

to prophecies in the Old Testament — to those, for example, which associate the Messianic era with the restoration of Israel from captivity — is true. This is owing to the limits of prophetic vision in the ancient inspired seers. But in the case of Christ, as Neander remarks, we can admit no such mingling of two events, no error through which the truth, revealing itself to his spirit, was confused or clouded. This conclusion is based not only on our belief in Christ's superiority to the Prophets, but also, as will be pointed out later, on exegetical grounds, on his actual recorded teaching in reference to the prospects of his kingdom. We cannot, with Bengel, take the "immediately" (verse 29) as an equivalent of "next in order." If we could, there would remain the other chronological statements, — "this generation shall not pass away," etc.; "there be some standing here," etc.

(2) There are certain critics, sincere believers in supernatural Christianity, who do not hesitate to say that Jesus actually predicted that the Second Coming was to occur within this limit of time. Weiss is one of these. He labors to show that such a prediction is no ground for the imputation of error to Christ. He argues that the postponement of the fulfilment of a prophecy is always possible in the divine administration; that there are biblical examples of it. He affirms, in short, that all prophecies, especially of judgment and punishment, are conditional; that is, that they are made with a tacit proviso.

A like opinion is cautiously suggested by Dean Plumptre in Ellicott's "New Testament Commentary for English Readers." In his notes on Matt. x. 23 and xxiv. 29, Dean Plumptre says: —

"It will be enough humbly to express my own personal conviction that what seems the boldest solution is also the truest and most reverential. The human thoughts of the Son of Man may not have travelled in this matter to the farthest bounds of the mysterious horizon. . . . There is that in God which answers to the modification of a purpose in man, and now postpones, now hastens, the unfolding of his plan. . . . He [Christ], as truly man, and as having, therefore, vouchsafed to accept the limitations of knowledge incident to man's nature, speaks of the two events as poets and prophets speak of the far-off future."

Dean Plumptre adds that the thoughts of the Apostles and their immediate disciples were mainly moulded on this prediction; and in his comment on Matt. xxiv. 36, he speaks of "their assumption that the Son of Man had definitely fixed the time of his appearing," and "their consequent forgetfulness of the 'long-suffering' which might extend a day into a thousand years (2 Peter iii. 3, 8)."

The objection to conceiving of Jesus as subject to the limitations of the Old Testament Prophets in forecasting the future, has already been stated. It is true that prophecies of judgment are not irrevocable Sometimes it is distinctly said that they are conditional, even when they have been uttered in the

most unqualified terms. The Prophet Joel proclaims "the day of the Lord" as "nigh at hand," and describes it in all its terror. But he goes on to say that the threatening may not be fulfilled. Let the people forsake their sins. God is gracious. "Who knoweth whether he will not turn and repent?" (Joel ii. 1, 13, 14.) But in the case of the prediction of the Second Advent in the Synoptical Gospels the parallel fails, on account of the explicit character of the chronological statements which are connected with it. At this point Weiss encounters a difficulty which his observations do not avail to remove.

(3) Dean Mansel, in "The Speaker's Commentary," has adopted an opinion, that was broached by Luther, that the destruction of Jerusalem and the final advent to Judgment were by Christ himself mingled together from beginning to end of the Prophetic Discourse. That is to say, Christ purposely discussed both these events in the same breath, using language applicable to both alike. As both events, the end of the temple and the end of the world, were coupled in the question of the Disciples, so they were indiscriminately treated in the answer. This is certainly an unexampled method of teaching. The interpretation, when the attempt is made to carry it through the Discourse, appears artificial and confused.

(4) Most candid scholars at present prefer the hypothesis that the reports of the Lord's Discourse — which, it must be remembered, are translations of it

into Greek, and in an abridged form — are tinged by a subjective anticipation of the Disciples, the result of their own thoughts and yearnings with regard to a point left indefinite in the Lord's prophetic teaching, the design of which was to afford glimpses of grand turning-points in the development of his kingdom. "If Christ," says Neander, "pointed forward to the great effective forces or steps involved in his coming in the world's history, his victorious self-revelation, bringing in his kingdom, he meant thereby in part his triumph in the fall of the previous sensuous form of the theocracy, and in the more free and mighty spread of this kingdom, to be secured by it, and in part his last coming for the consummation of his kingdom. He had in view the judgment of the degenerate theocracy, and that final judgment, — the one being the first more free and mighty development of the kingdom of God, the other its final consummation; both being regarded by him as events corresponding one to the other, — just as in general, in the great epochs in the world's history, God reveals himself, sitting in judgment on a creation ripe for its downfall, and calling a new creation into being. Of this character are the critical and creative epochs of the world's history, having relation one to another; while collectively they prefigure that epoch when the judgment is completed, and with it the creation of the divine kingdom. . . . It is easy to understand how it might happen that in apprehending and reproducing such discourses of Jesus, from the stand-

point of the hearers, the successive epochs or stages which Christ exhibited in a certain correspondence with one another, and which, although he did not designate measures of time, he kept more apart, should become mingled with one another." Weiss himself is compelled to concede such a dislocation in the case of Matt. xxiv. 35. We have seen, and it is generally conceded, that in the *Logia* of Matthew there are clear examples of a grouping together of utterances of Jesus on separate occasions. The Sermon on the Mount is an illustration. That the Synoptical reports of the Prophetic Discourse should exhibit traces of the feeling, spontaneous in its origin, that the Return of Christ was to be soon, is a plausible supposition. We cannot be sure, from anything recorded in the Gospels, that Jesus spoke explicitly of the fall of Jerusalem as a "coming" on his part. But this term was used by him not always in reference to the same event. In the fourteenth chapter of John, in the third verse, it is held by both Meyer and Weiss that the "Coming" of which Jesus speaks is the Parousia, while in the eighteenth verse, the "Coming" of which mention is made is held by Meyer to refer to the mission of the Comforter, or Paraclete,—by Weiss to the Resurrection; and Weiss concedes that in the twenty-third verse the "Coming" refers to the spiritual communion into which he was to enter with the Disciples. Here, then, in a single chapter of John the "Coming" of Jesus is applied to three distinct manifestations of himself.

In two places in the Book of Revelation (ii. 5, 15) there is mention of a coming of Christ to a specific act of judgment, distinguished from the final assize.

Besides the passages just referred to, there are the words addressed by Jesus to the High Priest: —

Matt. xxvi. 64.	Luke xxii. 69.
Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.	But from henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God.

The "henceforth" in Matthew (*ἀπ' ἄρτι*), and the "from henceforth" in Luke (*ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν*), signify "from this time onward." They probably both stand for the same Aramaic expression, — the expression used by Jesus. They refer to the continuous manifestation of the power of Christ in the advance of his cause and kingdom. As the passage stands in Matthew, the "Coming" is part and parcel of this gradual manifestation. So Meyer interprets it. Weiss would limit the "henceforth" to the first clause; but there is nothing in the construction of the sentence to warrant the restriction. The High Priest was to see — was to have unmistakable evidence — that Christ was bearing rule, was regnant above. Whether the reader agrees with Meyer or with Weiss on the specific point where they differ here, it is clear that Christ referred to his "Coming," not attaching a uniform sense to the term. Hence it was easy for slight changes in the collocation of his prophetic words to creep into the tradition. The Apostles understood,

and they were right in understanding, that Revelation had reached its fulness, that the next grand epoch was to be the Parousia, that they were living, in this sense, in the last times. It was natural for them to think that the final coming of the Lord would not long be delayed.

2. That Jesus himself did not assert that his Second Coming would take place in immediate conjunction with the capture of Jerusalem by the Romans, or in the lifetime of the generation then in being, is not an *a priori* conclusion: it may be established on exegetical grounds. He declared that he did not himself know when it would occur. "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only" (Matt. xxiv. 36). Of course it is possible to interpret "day and hour" with strict literalness. Under this interpretation, the passage would prove nothing to our purpose. But at another time, after the Resurrection, when he was asked if he was at once to restore the kingdom to Israel, he answered that the question related to a secret of the Almighty: "It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority" (Acts i. 7). They were to carry their testimony, he added, "unto the uttermost part of the earth." Here we see the eagerness of the Disciples for the consummation of the kingdom, side by side with the assurance of Christ that the date when their hopes would be realized was an unknown, unrevealed fact in the divine administration. It was

affirmed by him that certain marked events, such as would require much time, would precede "the end." The Gospel was to be preached to "the whole world, for a testimony unto all the nations" (Matt. xxiv. 14). But the force of this proof in the case is weakened by the conceptions of the world entertained, at least by the Apostles, and by the language used respecting the promulgation of the Gospel. Paul writes to the Colossians that the Gospel had been "preached in all creation under heaven" (Col. i. 23). There are, however, distinct and satisfactory proofs, which are afforded by the Evangelists themselves, that Jesus looked forward to the continuance of the present order of things after the fall of Jerusalem and the Jewish State, and to a slow and gradual operation of the Gospel in the world of mankind. One of these decisive proofs is the parable of the vineyard (Matt. xxi. 33–44). There it is said that the vineyard will be taken from the husbandmen who have charge of it, and will be "let out to other husbandmen, which shall render unto him [unto the lord of the vineyard] the fruits in their seasons." Then it is added plainly: "The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." This can signify nothing else than a Gentile ascendency to succeed that of the Jews in the matter of religion, and the continuance of the former. The parables of the leaven and of the grain of mustard-seed point without ambiguity to the long-continued and progressive influence of the

Gospel among mankind. The same impression is made by the parable of the sower and by the parable of the farmer who plants his seed and leaves it in the ground, "to spring up and grow, he knoweth not how, . . . first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear" (Mark iv. 26–29). A like impression is made by the simile of the corn of wheat falling into the earth, dying, and bearing much fruit, which was uttered by Christ when Greeks sought an interview with him (John xii. 24). In John's Gospel much more prominence is given to the spiritual Coming of Christ than to the Parousia. But where the Parousia is distinctly referred to, — as in vi. 39 *seq.*, 44, 54, — it is not implied that those who were then living would survive to witness it. It is said of every one who believes on the Son: "I will raise him up at the last day." No mention is made of the fall of Jerusalem as a sign and immediate precursor of the Advent of Christ to fulfil this promise. Nor is there any such mention in the Epistles.

The ethical teaching of Christ evidently presupposes that the earth is to continue to be the abode of his followers. This implication runs through the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount. They have to do with the social relations of man to man in the earthly life. The supposition of a speedy termination of the existing order of things is entirely out of keeping with their character and tone. The reality and power of evil in men's hearts is clearly discerned, the antagonism which Christianity will infallibly pro-

voke is depicted in strong colors, and at the same time the way is pointed out in which evil is to be overcome in the world, and men are to be moved to recognize the Heavenly Father by observing the spirit and conduct of his children.

3. The Apostles in their expectation of the speedy advent of the Lord express a personal hope, and not an inspired prediction. We have seen that the time of the Parousia was not a subject of Revelation. This truth they record. There are no precepts which are given by them as by divine authority which depend on this expectation. There is a remarkable passage in the First Epistle to the Corinthians which it is pertinent here to notice (1 Cor. vii. 25 *seq.*). The Apostle Paul recommends the Corinthians who are single not to marry. His reason is "the present distress," by which he means, to quote the language of Ellicott, "the precursory woes and calamities associated with the Lord's coming." For this recommendation, as he says, he has "no commandment of the Lord." Jesus had left no precept to this effect, — a remark which shows that in all probability Paul had written accounts of the Saviour's teaching. The Apostle simply gives his advice. Among the recent commentators, the most satisfactory exposition of the whole passage is that given by Heinrici, and the similar view of Ellicott. Says the latter: "'I give my opinion or advice.' . . . See 2 Cor. viii. 10. . . . It seems scarcely to amount here to 'judgment,' but, in accordance with the tenor of the whole passage,

to point to the 'opinion' which the Apostle had formed on the whole difficult subject" — as is indicated in the next verse, "'I think, therefore,' etc. — which now, not so much in his office as Apostle as in his general position, . . . he states as his counsel or advice." He gives it as one who was enabled by the mercy of God to be trusty. In the closing verse of the chapter, — "I think that I also have the spirit," — "there is nothing," to quote Ellicott again, "of a rebukeful tone towards any who might doubt the Apostle's words;" . . . it implies, however, "in its very reserve the grave claim to attention which the counsel demanded." But it was still counsel, and not injunction. There were occasions when the Apostle asserted the authority of his office, and claimed for his precepts, as inspired, obedience. Here no such claim is put forth. There is neither a precept transmitted from Christ, nor is there a requirement dictated by the Spirit. Where the motive is partly, to say the least, the expectation of the Parousia, instead of an official command, we have an expression of personal judgment, as from a trustworthy and spiritually enlightened man. When Paul in another place (1 Thess. iv. 15) professes to speak "by the word of the Lord" respecting the Parousia, this reference to divine authority cannot fairly be taken to cover more than the general truth that when the Lord comes, they who have died will share in the blessing with those who will then be in the land of the living. Although the phraseology indi-

cates his feeling that he was to be of the latter class, this forms no essential element in the doctrine that is expressed.

The Apostles were authorized and inspired teachers of the Gospel. They were appointed and qualified to present expositions of Christianity that should be normal in the Church. Beyond the external proofs of the authority given them, their inspiration is evinced alike in the quality of their writings and of their spoken utterances; for it was the men themselves who were inspired. At the same time it is quite possible for an incorrect and exaggerated idea of their function to be entertained. Divine attributes were not imparted to them. They were not omniscient. As to the invisible world, for example, an Apostle said, "We" — not *you*, but *we* — "see through a glass darkly." Glimpses of things lying in the future were accorded them. But, like prophecy in general, revelations of the future were in their form figurative and fragmentary. Hence the difficulty which is found by candid and thorough students of the New Testament writings in forming a coherent and systematic view on matters included under the head of Eschatology. If these are prolific topics of controversy, it is partly from the character of the data from which conclusions are to be deduced. It was the office of the Apostles to plant the Church and to train the Church in its infancy; but Church history was not disclosed to them in advance. It was not given to

them, except in a limited measure, to forecast the future. There were illuminated points, patches of light cast down from above. Beyond these, their personal anticipations might stray, for they were but men; but time alone could verify or nullify their personal hopes or fears. The Church for several centuries found it hard to believe in a possible victory for Christ without his miraculous, visible presence; but as Christianity moved onward in the Roman Empire from conquest to conquest, there sprang up a new faith and hope.

IV.

THE THEOLOGICAL IDEAS OF MATTHEW ARNOLD.

That Matthew Arnold was a master of the literary art will not be disputed. Of this fact the attraction which he was able to impart to his discussions of religious topics is one proof. He deserves credit for a sincere desire to rescue the Bible from the neglect and even contempt with which it is often treated in these days, especially by the uneducated class. There is an important basis of truth in the general affirmation, on which Arnold is never tired of insisting, that "the language of the Bible is fluid, passing, and literary, not rigid, fixed, and scientific." Poetry is not to be interpreted as if it were prose. Fervent discourses are not to be expounded as if they were exact and methodical treatises. Among Arnold's critical observations on the Scriptures not a little is said that is highly suggestive, and to a discriminating reader helpful. He is not a profound scholar in this department, and for this reason not unfrequently just misses the truth. On the other hand, he is not a superficial or ill-informed writer, even on matters pertaining to New Testament criticism. Among the exceptions of a general nature to be

taken to his ways of thought, there is to be reckoned his overweening regard for the *Zeitgeist*, or "Time-Spirit," as he well renders the German phrase. It misbecomes a student of the past to pay a slavish reverence to this impersonal divinity. There are too many examples of a wrong path taken by "the Spirit of the Age." Too often the "Time-Spirit" has been turned into devious ways, and been either lost in error, or caught in the snare of a half-truth. Who would maintain now that the spirit of the Renaissance, in the things of religion, in some of the principal seats of that great intellectual movement, was the spirit of wisdom? The "Time-Spirit" was never more self-assured, never more full of disdain for all who questioned its authority, than in the eighteenth century, in the period when a shallow deistic philosophy was prevalent. Yet Arnold in his remarks on Bishop Butler, even when he has just conceded that Butler routed his adversaries and vanquished the fashionable infidelity of that day, still cannot forego the use of his slightly monotonous appeals to the "Time-Spirit," in answer to some of Butler's postulates. In the earlier part of this century the "Time-Spirit" in Germany found in the older and now exploded naturalistic Rationalism, springing from the Kantian school, the acme of possible attainment in the sphere of religion. The past warns us to remember still the counsel of the Apostle to "hold fast" — not that which is new — but "that which is good."

Arnold wished to find "for the Bible a basis in

something which can be verified." The corner-stone of his system, if system it is to be called, is a conception of God which he not only regards as true, and evidently so, but even identifies with the biblical idea respecting this fundamental point. His theory may be termed an unscientific Pantheism; or perhaps, inasmuch as he does not profess to exhaust the conception of the Deity by his definition, an Agnostic Pantheism. In "Literature and Dogma," with much, although it can scarcely be said with wearisome, iteration he explains that the equivalent of God is "the Power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness." One would suppose that we have here a distinct expression of what, not lettered persons alone, but the world at large as well, mean by "cause," and designate by this name. But no! our author warns us that such notions belong to "metaphysics," and were quite foreign to the simple Israelites. Moreover, we ourselves run off into speculation the moment we talk of them. There is a Power, a Power exerting itself, or being exerted, a Power exerting itself for a particular end, or producing a definite effect; yet it must not be denominated a "cause." Most people, whether simple or not, would be moved to ask what more precise description of cause and causal agency could be given than is involved in this favorite phrase of Arnold. In his second work, "God and the Bible," he makes an elaborate effort to explain his remarkable definition of God, and the Israelites' conception of him, and

to rule out the idea that under the "Power, not ourselves," there is included the notion of a *being*. In this latter work we are told that we must not think of "the Power that makes for righteousness" as inhering in a subject, — this is a misconception; it is anthropomorphic. Is all that is meant, then, that righteousness is observed, or is believed, to be followed by blessedness? Is there nothing but the bare fact of a succession of consequent to antecedent, after the manner of Hume's theory of causation? More than this is intended. There is an "operation" which yields this result. Things are so constituted that the supposed effect is *produced*. It is a "law of nature" like the law of gravitation. It is a "stream of tendency." When we speak, and when the Israelites spoke, of the "Power that makes for righteousness" as "eternal," all that is really meant is that righteousness always was and always will be attended with blessing. Arnold does not seem to be aware that in trying to fence off the conception of *being* as connected with the "Power, not ourselves," he does not succeed in escaping from what he styles "metaphysics." There is an "operation" left; there is "a perceived energy." The doctrine is simply this: that the world — things collectively taken — is such that a certain result, namely, blessedness, is sure to be worked out by the practice of righteousness. It falls short of being a dogmatic Pantheism by the added statement that we cannot "pretend to know the origin and composition of the

Power," etc.; we cannot say that it is a person or thing. In one place Arnold professes that he will not *deny* that "the Power" is "a conscious intelligence." But ordinarily he treats the conception that his "Power" is intelligent as pure anthropomorphism. If it be this, why admit it even as a possibility? If Arnold had pondered the subject more deeply, if he had carefully studied such a work, for example, as Lotze's "Mikrokosmus," he might have learned that the idea of personality, when connected with the conception of God, involves no philosophical difficulty. If by anthropomorphism is meant the limiting of God, or making him finite, no such consequence follows from personality.

It is interesting to inquire what becomes of devotion, of what men have always meant by prayer and communion with God, when God is made to be nothing more than a law of things, "a stream of tendency." In a foot-note Arnold gives the following answer: "All good and fruitful prayer, however men may describe it, is at bottom nothing else than an energy of aspiration towards the Eternal, *not ourselves*, that makes for righteousness, — of aspiration towards it and co-operation with it." The Eternal, it must be remembered, which is referred to by the use of the pronoun *it*, signifies no being, — this is expressly disclaimed. "It," "the Eternal," is the fact that "righteousness was salvation," and will "go on being salvation." "It," "the Eternal," is the experienced and expected conjunction of these

two things. What aspiration towards "it," and co-operation with "it" denote, and with what propriety either of these or both together can be taken to signify *prayer*, in particular the *supplication* which has always been held to be the prime essential in prayer, we are left to conjecture.

Considering the tendencies of the time in the direction of Pantheistic thought, it is not a matter for surprise that Arnold should bring forward the notion of an impersonal divinity. There is, however, some reason for astonishment that he should present his conception as the kernel of the Israelites' faith, the living God of whom the Prophets spoke, and in praise of whose perfection the Psalms were composed. He admits, to be sure, that the Hebrews personified, and could not but personify, "the Stream of tendency." Surely it is nothing short of an amazing error to regard the personal qualities which the Hebrews attached to God as an accidental and separable element in their faith. Take away the personality of God, and what basis would have remained for that living communion with him, that joy in him, which formed the life and soul of the Hebrew religion? Substitute the vague abstractions which make up this Pantheistic definition of deity for the designations of God in the Prophets and the Psalms, and the frigidity and almost ludicrous emptiness that remain, fairly exhibit the Hebrew religion as it would have been, if its essential contents had accorded with our author's idea of it. Not even an intuition

is allowed them of this imaginary divinity, the connection of righteousness with happiness, but their knowledge of "it" is described as empirical; it is something found out by experience. "From all they could themselves make out, and from all that their fathers had told them," they arrived at the conclusion that righteousness was the way to happiness. The truth is, that in the Hebrew mind righteousness was infinitely more than a perceived condition of being happy. It was a requirement from without, from the Holy One. Their delight was in him. When they failed in righteousness, as fail they did, the only hope of happiness was through contrition and pardon from God.

Having subtracted from religion and theology the fundamental truth of a personal God, it is interesting to inquire what account Arnold gives of the substance of Christianity. It would not be candid to deny that he presents certain thoughts and suggestions of spiritual value, and certain felicitous phrases respecting Christ which easily take lodgment in the memory. The sum of his doctrine is contained in his often-repeated statement of the "method" and the "secret" of Jesus, and the spirit or tone of his teaching. The *method* is that of "inwardness," — "Cleanse the inside of the cup." So far there is nothing novel and nothing to be disputed in our author's exposition. The *secret* is self-renouncement, — "He that will save his life, shall lose it." The element in which the method and spirit are worked is *mildness*, or

what is expressively termed "sweet reasonableness." There was, it is well said, a "winning felicity" and a "balance," free from all fanaticism and extravagance. The trouble with this description of Christ and his teaching is that it contains a most incomplete account of the "secret" of Jesus. All that Jesus says of the Father in heaven, of the relation of the human soul to him, of the joy of personal trust in him, of his unsleeping care of his children, is left out. The Divine Father himself is left out. Will it be soberly pretended that all this is no essential part of the doctrine of Jesus? Will it be pretended that in his conception of the inward life of the soul, this conscious relation to the Father had no vital place? What did the prayers of Jesus himself signify? What did he mean when, being alone as regards human sympathy, he said that he was not alone because the Father was with him? What did he mean when he said at the moment of death, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit"? If self-renouncement is the whole secret, how does the religion of Jesus differ from Buddhism? We are not surprised to hear Arnold say that it does not. Buddhism, he tells us, has not only the sense for righteousness, it has even the "secret of Jesus." But it employs the secret ill, it is added, because it lacks the method, "the sweet reasonableness, the unerring balance." The central, substantial principle, the "secret," is declared to be in both systems the same. The real distinction between them,

the radical distinction and source of differences, Arnold omits to point out. It lies in the Pantheistic root of the Buddhistic ethics, in contrast with the doctrine of the living, personal God and Father, which is involved in all the teaching of Jesus, and pervades Christianity as a religious and ethical system. Seeking to avoid this truth, and to put in its place a vague Pantheistic philosophy, Arnold is obliged to content himself with a maimed and mutilated representation of the essentials of the doctrine of Jesus. He falls into the same sort of error which he charges on Buddhism. He omits from the teaching of Christ, and his ideal of self-renouncement and the unworldly temper, the truth expressed in such sayings as this: "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

That Arnold should discard the New Testament miracles altogether, is the necessary consequence of his repudiation of Christian theism. If nature and the course of nature are not traced back to the will of a Creator and Sustainer of all things, there is no room left for the supernatural either in the realm of matter or in that of spirit. As far as Arnold deigns to argue the question, his principal point is that we are able to see how the stories of miracles arise and grow up. For this reason they lose their hold on our faith. It is true that we can see how many miraculous stories have grown up. The same thing, however, is true of an endless amount of non-miraculous narrative. The Bible miracles, it is asserted,

cannot stand as long as they are admitted to form a class by themselves. The assumption here is that in the Christian religion there is nothing distinctive, nothing unique, nothing to awaken or to warrant the expectation that a power will be exerted superior to nature. Arnold well defines his position on this subject when he says that if we had accounts of the ministry of Christ which we knew to have come from the immediate Disciples, we should not have in them a whit less of the miraculous than the canonical Gospels contain. Are we to conclude, then, that it was impossible for Jesus, in case he really healed the blind and the lame, as the Gospels record, to have furnished any credible evidence that he did it, — any evidence to be relied on in after times, or affording ground for reasonable belief in the facts even to those who were with him when they occurred? What idea of Jesus Christ himself is implied in the proposition that the family of followers whom he associated with himself, whom he personally taught and trained, were utterly disqualified from giving substantially trustworthy testimony concerning what with their own eyes they saw him do?

In his comments on the Gospels, Arnold shows himself quite capable of discerning the weak side of the criticisms of Baur and the Tübingen school. He does not succeed, however, in avoiding erroneous and misleading statements on matters of fact, not to speak of fallacious theories. An instance of the former is his misinterpretation of Papias, the earliest of the author-

ities who give an account of the origin of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. He speaks of the preference on the part of Papias "for oral relations" in comparison with Scriptures. The truth is, as Bishop Lightfoot has conclusively shown, that the work of Papias was a commentary on written records, and that the oral relations which he valued consisted of anecdotes illustrative of his exegesis, his statements relative to Matthew and Mark being one example of them. The collection of New Testament writings into the form of the canon as it has come down to us, was gradual. But there can be no doubt that Papias made use of authoritative Scriptures of apostolic authorship; nor is there the least reason, from his silence respecting Luke and John, or from the silence of Eusebius in his references to Papias, to infer that these last authors were not among them.

Arnold more than once affirms with emphasis that the record of the life and words of Jesus when we first get it "has passed through at least half a century, or more, of oral tradition." This statement is contrary to the truth. Critics of highest authority, non-orthodox as well as orthodox, agree that the Gospel of Mark was written a number of years before the destruction of Jerusalem. The Gospel of Matthew in its present form soon followed, and the Gospel of Luke soon after the date of Matthew. But there were written records prior to the composition of the Synoptics, which were superseded by them. Of this there is proof from Luke's own statement, besides other

evidence. Moreover, the fact should not be suppressed that the oral tradition very early, in the presence of the Apostles and in their teaching, so far acquired a definite form as to insure it against perversion. That tradition is embodied in the Synoptical Gospels.

Arnold makes it clear that the Fourth Gospel is no such theological romance as Baur attempted to make it out to be. He dismisses with little respect the notion that John did not live at Ephesus. But his own hypothesis is open to weighty objection. His theory is that the materials of the Gospel are largely from communications made by the Apostle John himself, and that these were issued, under the auspices of the Elders of the Church at Ephesus, by an editor. The tradition, says Arnold, "speaks of a *revision* of what the Apostle John produced." This is what the tradition does not do. The statement of Arnold is founded on what is said in that ancient document, the Muratorian canon; but the Latin word (*recognoscentibus*) which he takes to mean "revise," is properly rendered "certify," or "authenticate." The legend has nothing to say of any "revision" by the fellow-disciples of John. A certificate or testimony, such as the Latin term above mentioned might denote, is appended to the Gospel (John xxi. 24), where it is explicitly asserted that John "wrote" the contents of the book. There is then no such tradition respecting a "revision" of "notes" of communications made by John, as Arnold assumes to exist. The theory is a pure

conjecture, without a scintilla of historical evidence to support it.

Looking at the Fourth Gospel "from within," Arnold has too discerning an eye not to recognize "its unity of tone, its flowingness and connectedness." Yet he would have us believe that the author pieced together his Johannine notes in a very mechanical style. He applies his theory to account for the words, "Arise, let us go hence," which occur at the end of the fourteenth chapter. There was a transition to be made to a fresh set of notes. These words were put in between the end of one set and the beginning of another. But why? "They were traditional words of Jesus, as we see from the 'Rise, let us be going,' of St. Matthew; and the composer of the Fourth Gospel thought that they would come in serviceably at this point." The reader will probably judge that this is no explanation at all. An expression, it is implied, is picked up and inserted in the midst of utterances of Jesus to which it has no conceivable relation. And this is done by a writer whose work is characterized by "flowingness and connectedness"! If the words were actually spoken by Jesus at the point in his discourse where they are placed, all is clear. Without a supposition of this sort, they are meaningless.

When Arnold speaks of the "flowingness" of the Fourth Gospel, he suggests a quality of it which his theory of its authorship fails adequately to take account of. Included in this "flowingness," at the bot-

tom of it, we might add, and pervading the whole Gospel, is that element of personal experience on the part of the author to which reference has been made on a preceding page. If it is the Apostle John himself, pouring out of his own soul the personal affection and reverence for Christ, in which the work is steeped, then the autobiographic character of the Gospel is explained. But how shall we account for it if the book emanates from a Greek editor, patching together scattered notes?

The contrast is striking between the light humor of Matthew Arnold's prose writings and the gloom of his poetry. In the poems, which are so admirable in their way, one may not doubt that his inmost feeling finds expression. There pervades them a tone of sadness, — a sadness without remedy and without solace. Faith gone, the fountains of joy are dry. And yet he sees that the millions —

> "Have such need of joy!
> And joy whose grounds are true!
> And joy that should all hearts employ,
> As when the past was new!"

The want of the world is —

> "One mighty wave of thought and joy lifting mankind amain."

But the poet sees no ground of hope. He has no counsel to give to mortals, in their unquenchable yearning for bliss, but to "moderate desire," to be content with what a few days on earth may yield.

"Fools! that so often here
Happiness mocked our prayer,
I think might make us fear
A like event elsewhere!
Make us, not fly to dreams, but moderate desire!"

That is to say, putting the poet's idea into plain prose, our disappointments here should convince us that the deepest hopes of humanity are illusive. A thoughtful writer has contrasted this faithless vein with the spirit of Browning in his "Cleon," where it is argued that because "life's inadequate to joy," there must be a life beyond to meet nature's demand. Cleon, heathen though he is, dares imagine some future state, —

"Unlimited in capability
For joy, as this is in desire for joy, —
To seek which joy, hunger forces us."

And this makes him lament that Zeus has made no revelation to verify the irrepressible thought. A lesson may be read in Tennyson the reverse of the despairing inference of Arnold: —

"My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live for evermore,
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is;

"This round of green, this orb of flame,
Fantastic beauty; such as lurks
In some wild poet, when he works
Without a conscience or an aim."

In the mournful strain of Arnold's verse it is something to find that the sufficiency of the Christian faith,

when that faith is possible, to purify the soul and to fill it with gladness, is confessed with enthusiasm. Of the time when Christianity was young, he sings, —

> "Oh, had I lived in that great day,
> How had its glory new,
> Filled earth and heaven, and caught away
> My ravished spirit too!"

The loss of faith is the loss of cheer. This is one sign that the health of the soul is gone. If the pessimistic temper does not ensue, it is owing to an arrest of the natural tendency of the unbelieving or agnostic state of mind. But desolation of spirit, even if it reach the limit of despair, will not of necessity open the way to faith. It may not bring with it any lowering of self-estimation, much less the humility which deplores the presence and power of evil in the soul, and sighs for deliverance. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

V.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY'S COMMENTS ON THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES.

No one approaches the investigation of the Gospel histories without prior beliefs, or inclinations to believe, of one kind or another, respecting God, and the nature and destiny of man. It is impossible that one's impressions relative to the trustworthiness of the Gospel histories should not vary more or less with the ideas and expectations which he brings to this field of inquiry. His creed as to matters of natural religion, be that creed positive or negative or indeterminate, will inevitably and by the force of logic have its influence on his estimate of those narratives. Professor Huxley is no exception to this rule. In his little book on Hume, in his "Lay Sermons," in his controversial papers against Professor Wace, he has expressed himself too clearly to leave us in any doubt in reference to his philosophical opinions. He has explained how he came to invent the term "Agnostic," which describes his position. If the name is new, the main thing denoted by it is expressed by the Apostle Paul when he says of the world, that it "*knew not God;*"

although the Agnosticism to which the Apostle referred commonly had a stock of beliefs of its own in regard to the world unseen, — therein differing from the Agnosticism of which Professor Huxley has the distinction of being the godfather.

Professor Huxley thinks that what we call the mind is a collection or series of sensations standing in certain relations to each other, and that this is all we know about it. That there is a thinking agent, such as men generally suppose to exist when they use the word *I*, there is no proof. Their conviction is not an intuition; it is not a rational postulate; it is nought except a bare hypothesis which there is no ground for affirming as a fact. There is a uniformity of succession in the sensations which constitute the soul, as far as we know anything of it or have any reason to assert anything of it; but there is no freedom of choice, in the sense that the circumstances, internal and external, being the same, any different determination of the will from that which actually takes place, is possible. On this view of things, how there can be a rational basis for responsibility, or for the obligations of morality, is a natural inquiry, but an inquiry with which just now we are not concerned. "What we call the operations of the mind," says Professor Huxley, "are functions of the brain, and the materials of consciousness are products of cerebral activity." But the brain, like everything else that is alive, is developed from protoplasm, the primitive

form of living matter. Professor Huxley avows that we have no explanation of the way in which life may have originated from inorganic matter, but he indicates no doubt that it had this origin. The reader would naturally say that we have here a scheme of bald materialism. But Professor Huxley resents this imputation. He insists that we have no knowledge of anything but the heap of sensations, impressions, feelings, — or by whatever name they may be called. There may be a real something without, which is the cause of all our impressions. In that case, sensations are the symbols of that unknown something. This conclusion Professor Huxley favors, although he is at pains to declare that idealism is unassailable by any means of disproof within the limits of positive knowledge. There is the inconvenience, it may be added, which attaches to this last alternative, that it really involves the giving up by the idealist of belief in anybody, as well as anything, outside of himself. It involves the doctrine which metaphysicians style *solipsism*. But the "something" of which the brain is a product is unintelligent; and when the brain dissolves, there is nothing to prove that the phenomena of intelligence continue. There is no proof that the soul, that is, the series of sensations, does not come to an end. What is the nature and value of the difference between the "transfigured realism" of the Agnostics and old-fashioned materialism, the reader may be left to determine for himself. The existence

of a personal God is another of the propositions which are incapable of being established. "In respect to the existence and attributes of the soul, as of those of the Deity," says Professor Huxley, "logic is powerless and reason silent." As regards the attributes of God, — justice, benevolence, and the like, — he indicates no dissent from the "searching critical negation" of Hume. If there be a God, he thinks it demonstrable that God must be "the cause of all evil as well as all good," — a conclusion which would follow, to be sure, from the tenet that man is not a personal agent, freely originating his voluntary actions, but is no proper adjunct of the opposite doctrine.

In his book on Hume, Professor Huxley refers to the doctrines and arguments of Bishop Butler. "The solid sense of Butler," he says, "left the Deism of the Freethinkers not a leg to stand upon." But Hume, he intimates, has been successful where they failed. Hume does not concede what the Deists admitted. In the passage which Professor Huxley cites from Hume's "Inquiry," there is no denial of a supreme governor or of divine providence. Hume's position, or the idea which he puts into the mouth of the Epicurean, is that although experience shows that a virtuous course of life is attended with happiness, and a vicious course of life with misery, yet this experience affords not the least ground for expecting consequences of a like kind after life is over. "Every argument," says Hume, "deduced from

causes to effects, must of necessity be a gross sophism, since it is impossible for you to know anything of the cause but what you have antecedently not inferred, but described to the full, in the effect." This sweeping statement rests on the baldest empiricism. By parity of reasoning, if we cannot go an inch beyond what we have seen, we should have to say of a man who in a long course of conduct had acted justly, that we cannot infer in him the existence of an established disposition to conform to the dictates of justice in the future. However, Hume illogically admits that an expectation of this character is valid as far as "the ordinary course of events is concerned." His real ground, although it is not openly stated, is that we have no proof of a future state of being; and if he does not reject the belief in a supreme governor, and in divine providence as active in the present world, his silence on this point springs merely from civility or reserve. But it is only necessary to step out of the prison of a narrow empricism to find in the allotments of justice here, evidence enough to show that there is a just God, and thus to warrant the presumption, if not to justify the full belief, that there is a future life and a completion there of a system begun here, but not carried to completion. It is true that Butler's arguments in the "Analogy" are aimed at Deism, and not at Atheism, or Scepticism as to the essentials of natural religion. But it is also true that his arguments go farther and effect more than he directly intended. This he himself

sees and asserts. Whoever will candidly read his chapters on Natural Government and Moral Government will find in them evidence which points to the conclusion that there is a God, that he is just, and that there is a probability of a continuance of the system of rewards and punishments in a life beyond this.

Any one who saw the Cologne Cathedral as it was fifty years ago, half built and with a crane in the unfinished tower, would have had no doubt as to the plan of the structure or the design that had existed to realize it, sooner or later. What would have been said of an onlooker who should have denied that there was any evidence of a thought or an intention in the contriver of the edifice to do anything more than could then and there be seen?

It is obvious to discerning students of philosophy that the Agnostic theory is destructive of knowledge, if knowledge be anything but a consciousness of present sensations, including the present sensations which fall under the head of memory. All the investigations and reasonings of science proceed on the foundation of axioms, — call them intuitions, rational postulates, or by any other title. But these, according to Agnostics, denote simply a certain stage at which the process of evolution has arrived. What is to hinder them from vanishing, or resolving themselves into another set of axioms, with the forward movement of this unresting process? What then will

become of the doctrines of Agnosticism itself? It is plain that on this philosophy, all knowledge of realities, as distinct from transitory impressions, is a house built on the sand. All science is reduced to *Schein*, — mere semblance.

But it is not designed here to enter into a scrutiny of Agnosticism. Nor is it an object to hold up Professor Huxley as an adherent of obnoxious ideas in matters pertaining to natural theology, — ideas, however, it might be said, which have a degree of popularity. He has a right to his own opinions on these topics, and certainly is not to be denied the privilege of publishing them. The point here made is, that one who must necessarily have so little sympathy with the phenomena of the religious life, — by whom so much that, to an earnest theist, is the deepest reality, is unavoidably regarded as illusion, — will inevitably look upon the New Testament writings, even upon the historic records forming a part of them, from a point of view extremely prejudicial to any claims they may have to credence. An inhabitant of the frozen North who had convinced himself, after an examination of the subject deemed by himself sufficient, that there are no proofs of the existence of any land south of Hudson's Bay, and that all pretensions to the contrary are on a level with opinions on "lunar politics," could not be expected to give a sympathetic consideration to accounts of the scenery and life of the tropics. He would point an informant, with a smile of incredulity, to

the stunted vegetation and fields of ice about him. They make up his world. How can one give credit to the supernatural elements in Christianity, who finds no proof of the reality of anything supernatural, — to whom God, freedom, and immortality are unverifiable creations of fancy?

The New Testament from beginning to end has a great deal to say on the subject of belief and disbelief. It will not be denied that many of the utterances of Jesus directly relate to this theme. Nor can it fairly be questioned that among them are distinct declarations to the effect that belief in God, and certain aspirations and tempers of feeling congenial with it, are indispensable conditions of faith in himself and in his divine commission to represent the Father and to teach with authority. Christ did not fail to take account of the fact that many disbelieved in him, many of "the wise and understanding;" he looked this fact full in the face, but he was at no loss to explain the secret of such disbelief, its real origin and source. This circumstance is adapted to excite reflection. It does not excuse us, however, from a candid consideration of whatever objections can be alleged against the credibility of the Gospel narratives.

To Professor Huxley the Christ of history is shrouded in mist. Vain are his efforts to define to himself "the grand figure of Jesus as it lies in the primary strata of Christian literature." Shall he think of him as kindly and peaceful in his look and man-

ner, as a frowning judge, or as a bleeding ascetic, — as the Christ of the Second, or of the Fourth Gospel? He cannot tell. To him the elements that are to contribute to the image are confused and inconsistent. This is very remarkable when it is remembered that there is no personage in history of whom a more vivid and consistent idea is found in the minds of millions of human beings of every grade of culture, and when it is remembered that this conception is drawn from the view of him as he is presented in the four Gospels. The Jesus who uttered the Beatitudes, took little children in his arms, rebuked the ambition and rivalry of his Disciples, denounced the hollowness and selfishness of Pharisaic teachers, laid his hands on the blind and palsied and healed them, wept with the sisters at Bethany, leaned on the breast of John at the Supper, turned and looked upon Peter and moved him to shed tears of penitence, — of whom is there an image so distinct, so harmonious, stamped on the minds of so many men and women and children? The portraiture of Jesus in the Gospels, with its unique character, its marvellous, yet natural mingling of human traits with miraculous powers and supernatural authority, is itself a sufficient witness to its own faithfulness to the original. Criticism may raise difficulties about details in the narratives, but the picture that is painted by the Evangelists is too life-like for the truth of it to be questioned. It cannot be the product of invention. These humble narrators could never have produced an ideal portrait so full

of naturalness, and yet so exalted in its beauty and perfection.

Professor Huxley, in his controversy with Professor Wace, made the mistake of assuming that what was said by Baur, Zeller, Volkmar, and other writers of the Tübingen school thirty or forty years ago, corresponds with the opinions and theories of their successors in the line of liberal criticism in Germany. He was apparently not aware of the fact that many of the fundamental tenets of his authorities have been pretty generally abandoned by German scholars on all sides. When he dogmatically styles the Fourth Gospel "a theosophic romance of the first order," he is not aware that this hypothesis of Baur has few left, of any party, to do it reverence. What he has to say respecting the authorship and date of the Gospels has been demonstrated by Professor Wace to be entirely discordant with the published opinions of critics whom Professor Huxley had himself pronounced to be authorities worthy of the highest respect. A few words may here be added by way of comment on his observations relative to the integrity of the Gospels. He asserts that there is no proof that "any one of the Gospels existed, in the state in which we find it in the Authorized Version of the Bible, before the second century; or, in other words, sixty or seventy years after the events recorded." From the probable insertion of the last twelve verses of Mark in a portion of the early manuscripts of that Gospel, and of a fraction of the eighth chapter of John in

certain manuscripts of the Fourth Gospel, he draws the conclusion that there is a general uncertainty as to what the Evangelists really wrote. Such statements and reasonings are loose and misleading. Of the strength of the external evidence for the substantially correct transmission of the Gospels, any one may convince himself who will examine Professor Norton's work on the Genuineness of the Gospels, — the production of a Unitarian scholar who has never been charged with a want of critical impartiality. Ancient copyists, like modern printers, were liable to make mistakes. But the multiplying, at a very early day, of copies of the Gospels, which are represented in the later manuscripts, together with early translations and with numberless quotations in the ancient ecclesiastical writers, afford us means of textual criticism such as we possess in reference to no other writings of antiquity. The state of the facts concerning the two instances of probable interpolation to which Professor Huxley refers, instead of promoting, helps to disperse, the haze of uncertainty which he seeks to cast over the text of the Gospels. With regard to the closing verses of Mark, of which Jerome says that "nearly all the Greek texts omit them," their early insertion in a few manuscripts was no doubt owing to the peculiar abruptness with which that Gospel closed, and does not in the least imply a prevailing disposition to falsify or to deal carelessly with the works which were so precious to the early Christians. Professor Huxley quotes a part of

the marginal note in the Revised Version, attached to the story of the woman taken in adultery. The note reads thus: "Most of the ancient authorities omit John vii. 53 — viii. 11. Those which contain it vary much from each other." Of this interpolation Weiss observes: "It is a tradition which corresponds perfectly to the tone of the Synoptics. Rightly understood, it carries in itself decisive internal marks of truth, and no evidence of later invention." It was not unlikely a part of the oral tradition, which, being with good reason credited, was inserted by some one in his copy of John's Gospel. The point to be remarked is that in both the important cases of interpolation, as also in the passage relative to the three witnesses (1 John v. 7), — which is omitted in the Revised Version, — and so in the numerous, comparatively unimportant, instances of textual variation, we are possessed of exceptionally satisfactory means of deciding how the original stood. Whoever will acquaint himself with the character of the evidence for the genuineness of the works of classical literature which have been handed down to us, and will compare this evidence with the external proofs of the authenticity of the Gospels, will cease to be troubled by observations of the character of those quoted above from Professor Huxley.

Professor Wace, in his controversy with Professor Huxley, wisely declined to be diverted from the real issues involved in their debate by entering into a dis-

cussion of the narrative in the Synoptical Gospels of the Gadarene demoniac, — as Professor Wace remarks, "one of the most difficult and mysterious narratives in the New Testament." In undertaking to impeach the credibility of the Evangelists, Professor Huxley found it expedient to select a narrative which has been acknowledged to involve certain peculiar difficulties. Yet if the intention was to invalidate the proof of miracles, the choice was not altogether fortunate. That Jesus somehow effected the cure of persons called "demoniacs," is a part of the evangelical history which is denied by few, if any, of the sceptical critics of the present day. It is admitted to be a portion of that history which must be accepted as authentic. Critics of this class may charge exaggeration upon the narratives, but even they do not question that beneath them is a groundwork of historical fact. These cures are in some cases connected inseparably with things said by Jesus which are unquestionably authentic. Moreover, be the source of the disorders referred to what it may, there is no reasonable escape from the conviction that the maladies of those who were cured by the word of Jesus were more intense and aggravated than any of the disorders which may have been temporarily relieved by the juggling methods of exorcism in vogue among the Jews. Had it been otherwise, there would have been no occasion for trumping up the charge against him that he was in league with Beelzebub, and cast out demons by his aid. Jesus met this accusation by the

ad hominem argument, "By whom do your sons cast them out?" To this he added that a kingdom divided against itself could not stand: the Devil would not be fighting against himself: a strong man must be bound before his house can be entered and he be spoiled of his goods. Whatever opinion may be entertained concerning the nature of the disorders in question, that miraculous power was exerted by Jesus in curing them, and that his adversaries could not resort for an explanation of this power to any precedents within their own knowledge, are facts which it is unreasonable to dispute.

None of the narratives of this class is better attested and commended to credence by internal marks of verity than the account of the Gadarene demoniac. It is true that in Matthew two demoniacs are spoken of. If this be anything more than a seeming discrepancy, its presence does not affect in the least the credibility of the principal circumstances of an occurrence which all the Synoptics record. Since Dr. Thomson identified the place with Kersa, or Gersa, on the eastern shore of the lake, opposite Capernaum, no difficulties of consequence remain in respect to the locality which is assigned to the event by the several Evangelists. A madman, who had taken for his abode one of the holes in the rocky hillside which were used for tombs by the Jews, came out to meet Jesus. In the graphic narrative of Mark, and in that of Luke also, his wild and savage ways are vividly described, — his violence as shown in his breaking the fetters that bound him,

and in tearing off his clothes, in his outcries by night and by day, and his gashing his flesh with sharp stones. He was restored to sanity by Jesus, and was found, after an interval, sitting at his feet, "clothed and in his right mind." It has been sometimes conjectured that the plunging of the herd of swine down the precipice into the lake might have been an addition to the authentic facts, and not a part of the account as originally given by the Apostles. But even this incident is corroborated by the context. It was the report from those who had kept the swine that brought to the spot the people from the neighboring city, who were struck with fear, and by whom Jesus was besought to return to the western side of the lake. Moreover, the answer which is recorded by the Evangelists to the question of Jesus, "What is thy name?" and the other signs of a distracted consciousness which were manifest in the maniac's words and acts, are of a character to confirm the story as told by Mark and Luke, — a story which, there is no reason to doubt, emanated from eye-witnesses. As to the other inquiries which arise in connection with this class of narratives, it is not proposed here to enter into an investigation of the subject of demoniacal possession. Let it suffice to indicate briefly three main views of the matter, each of which has secured for itself more or less approval among considerate Christian scholars.

The first is the theory of "accommodation," — that Jesus entered into the "fixed idea" of the sufferers

that they were possessed by evil spirits, as a means of delivering them from an ingrained but delusive impression, and of thus effecting their cure. There are serious difficulties in the way of this theory. One of them is the circumstance that Christ when he was alone with his Disciples said nothing to correct the popular belief in which they shared, and bade them when they went out on their mission "to cast out devils" as well as to heal the sick. Nevertheless, the theory of accommodation has been adopted by scholars conspicuous for ability and candor. One of them was Nathaniel Lardner, a Unitarian in his theology, and eminent for his fairness as well as thoroughness in historical inquiries. Another is Meyer, a German scholar of marked independence and uprightness, who has had no superior in recent times as a commentator on the New Testament writings.[1] The accusation of dishonesty brought against adherents of this opinion is harsh and unfounded.

The second view on the subject is that presented

[1] Meyer's principal arguments are the absence of references to demoniacal possession in the Old Testament; the fact that so-called demoniacs were cured by exorcists; that no clear cases of possession occur at present; that there is no notice of demoniacal possession in John's Gospel, although the overcoming of Satan is there made a part of the Messiah's work, and Satan is said to enter into a man's mind and take control there (John ii. 27); and that the so-called demoniacs are not, as would be expected, of a diabolic temper and filled with malignant feelings towards Christ. (See Weiss's Meyer, on Matt. iv. 24.)

by Neander and others, who hold to a certain measure of accommodation on the part of Jesus to delusive impressions of the victims of these disorders. Their idea is that the agency of a personal Evil Spirit, the ruling spirit in a kingdom of evil, was truly and really concerned in the fearful maladies to which Jesus mercifully administered relief. The description which Neander gives in his "Life of Jesus" — and the same may be said of observations of Trench in his work on the Miracles — of the confusion, distraction of spirit, and mental distress, which prevailed in so extraordinary a degree, at the critical epoch when the Saviour appeared, is highly instructive and suggestive. It is the idea of Neander that Jesus had no wish to cast discredit, but was concerned to avoid casting discredit, on the essential truth underlying the notions, superstitious though they might be in form, of the wretched sufferers whom he was bent on healing morally as well as physically. It is generally implied in the narratives that there was moral evil at the root of the disordered condition of the demoniacs. This, however, can scarcely be presupposed in the case of the epileptic who had been a sufferer in this way "from a child" (Mark ix. 22).

The third opinion is that which accepts as literally true, or as substantially so, the ideas of the sufferers themselves respecting the inhabitation of evil spirits. This opinion Professor Huxley professes himself unable absolutely to disprove on grounds

lying within the compass of the sciences in which he is an adept. This he says even in reference to all the particulars of the Gadarene narratives. He cannot deny *ex cathedra* their possible truth. He brings forward, to be sure, the common objection that demoniacal possession does not occur at present. To this an opponent would answer that in this declaration he asserts more than he knows; moreover, that the laws which determine the movements of superhuman evil beings are beyond our ken; that their influence and operations on the earth and among men may not be the same at one epoch as at another; and that if it be true, to recur to the figure employed by Christ himself, that the house was entered and "the strong man" bound, the agency of evil spirits in certain forms of mischievous activity may be crippled and checked. If it is once admitted that there exist superhuman beings of evil disposition and intent, — and the proposition is one which he must be a bold man who ventures to deny, — the narratives in the Gospels, when literally taken, offer no offence to reason. The possibility of one mind falling into a strange thraldom under another, is believed to be illustrated in the facts of hypnotism.

But Professor Huxley avers that he should not believe in this inhabitation of evil spirits, even if it were demonstrated that Jesus Christ had taught it as a fact. He would not claim, however, that an argument of any cogency, in the case supposed, is to be drawn from his personal incredulity. These

are questions which are not to be determined by a count of heads. Other men, not inferior to himself in acuteness and grasp of intellect, and in readiness to follow in their judgments the dictates of reason, are of an opposite mind. Here is Richard Rothe, a philosopher of the largest powers, unfettered by any doctrinal bias, revered by all schools of thought in Germany for his golden candor, who argues at length in his *Dogmatik* for the literal acceptance of what Professor Huxley styles "the Gadarene story." He maintains the utter unreasonableness of the theory that beyond the limit of the human beings now living on the earth, whose moral tempers are depraved, there are no intelligent creatures who delight even more in evil; and he asserts the equal unreasonableness of maintaining that the range of their motions and activities is so restricted by police regulations that they are cut off from doing mischief here among men. It is fair to remind those who are disposed to attach to the personal incredulity of Professor Huxley an undue weight, that his professions of unbelief are carried much farther than they might feel inclined to follow him. He does not believe — it is not said that he denies, but he does not believe — that there is a Supreme Being who is personal or self-conscious; he does not believe that consciousness exists apart from the brain, and that mental action of man survives death. The personality of God, and the personality of man, and the continuance of man's conscious life after he ceases to breathe, are propositions not

included in the list of his affirmative beliefs. It is too much to expect that his aversion to admitting that superhuman spiritual beings exist and may produce effects such as are ascribed to them in the New Testament, according to the more common interpretation of its narratives, should be capable of being overcome by a declaration of the fact, were it known to come from Christ himself. But to those who do not share in this antecedent incredulity, who hold that we must depend for our knowledge of the subject almost exclusively upon Revelation, and who believe, on what they deem good and sufficient grounds, that Jesus taught only what he knew, — to those, his authority will be decisive. They may not be clear, they may differ among themselves as to what he professed to teach in relation to this subject; but to that teaching, when its purport and limit are settled, they will consider themselves rationally obliged to give credence. They will be apt to find themselves, not weakened, but confirmed in their confidence in him as a religious teacher, by the improbability that he who could thus bring back sanity, and with it moral health and peace, to a furious maniac, could have cherished a mistaken idea respecting the character of the disorder.

Professor Huxley endeavors to show by an example that the proof of mediæval miracles, such of them as no Protestant believes in, is just as strong as the proof of the miracles recorded in the Gospels. He even thinks that the evidence is stronger in the former case than in the latter. This ground of

debate has been well trodden. Long ago Douglas, in his "Criterion," set forth clearly and forcibly the difference between the common run of ecclesiastical miracles, as to the evidence that exists in support of them, and the miracles of Christianity. Mozley, in his Bampton Lectures, has presented a learned and cogent argument on the same topic. Even Cardinal Newman, in writings at a former day, has impressively exhibited the superior force of the proofs for the miracles of Scripture, in comparison with those adduced for miracles elsewhere related. The question is one which calls for the exercise of historical tact and judgment, and no degree of skill or amount of acquirements in natural science avail to supply this indispensable faculty. Niebuhr, with a mind naturally sceptical, saw at once a deep peculiarity in the Gospel narratives, which distinguishes them from the mass of legendary tales from which we instinctively turn away with incredulity. The "fundamental fact of miracles" in the life of Jesus was, in Niebuhr's estimation, lifted above all doubt. The "whole history of Jesus" he perceived to be true and real, "even if were not related with literal exactness in a single point." The parallelism between the character of the testimony for the Gospel miracles, and the proof of the legends of the saints, is superficial. The moment one strikes below the surface, essential differences appear, and structures raised by such authors as Renan on the basis of an opposite theory are seen to be built on no solid foundation.

To give more effect to his confident affirmations on this subject, Professor Huxley takes up the story related by Eginhard, or Einhard, the biographer of Charlemagne, of the translation from Italy of the relics of the martyrs Marcellinus and Petrus. Eginhard in his later days had contracted with a Roman deacon, Deusdona, to deliver to him the relics of these two saints, to be deposited in his own church at Odenwald, whither Eginhard had retired to spend the remainder of his life. Professor Huxley draws out the details of the transaction, but sums up the facts as follows: —

"Deusdona turns out to be a swindler, and has no relics. Thereupon Eginhard's agent, after due fasting and prayer, breaks open the tombs and helps himself.

"Eginhard discovers, by the self-betrayal of his brother abbot, Hildoin, that portions of his relics have been stolen and conveyed to the latter. With much ado he succeeds in getting them back.

"Hildoin's agent, Hunus, in delivering these stolen goods to him, at first declared they were the relics of St. Tiburtius, which Hildoin desired him to obtain; but afterward invented a story of their being the product of a theft, which the providential drowsiness of his companions enabled him to perpetrate from the relics which Hildoin well knew were the property of his friend.

"Lunison, on the contrary, swears that all this story is false, and that he himself was bribed by Hunus to allow him to steal what he pleased from the property confided to his own and his brother's care by their guest Ratleig. And the honest notary himself seems to have no hesita-

tion about lying and stealing to any extent, where the acquisition of relics is the object in view.

"For a parallel to these transactions one must read a police report of the doings of a 'long firm' or of a set of horse-coupers; yet Eginhard seems to be aware of nothing, but that he has been rather badly used by his friend Hildoin and the 'nequissimus nebulo' Hunus. . . .

"To a man like Eginhard, the mere satisfaction of the religious sentiment was obviously a powerful attraction. But, more than this, the possession of such a treasure was an immense practical advantage. If the saints were duly flattered and worshipped, there was no telling what benefits might result from their interposition on your behalf. For physical evils, access to the shrine was like the grant of the use of a universal pill and ointment manufactory; and pilgrimages thereto might suffice to cleanse the performers from any amount of sin." [Eginhard, in a letter, complained of the inattention which the martyrs had paid to his vows. His faith in their intercessions had been "utterly disappointed."]

"We may admit, then, without impeachment of Eginhard's sincerity or of his honor under all ordinary circumstances, that when piety, self-interest, the glory of the Church in general, and that of the church at Seligenstadt in particular, all pulled one way, even the workaday principles of morality were disregarded, and *a fortiori*, anything like proper investigation of the reality of the alleged miracles was thrown to the winds.

"And if this was the condition of mind of such a man as Eginhard, what is it not legitimate to suppose may have been that of Deacon Deusdona, Lunison, Hunus, and company, thieves and cheats by their own confession; or of the probably hysterical nun; or of the professional

beggars, for whose incapacity to walk and straighten themselves there is no guarantee but their own? Who is to make sure that the exorcist of the demon Wiggo was not just such another priest as Hunus; and is it not at least possible, when Eginhard's servants dreamed night after night in such a curiously coincident fashion that a careful inquirer might have found they were very anxious to please their master?"

On Professor Huxley's own showing, what is the mental and moral state of the agents in this transaction, of Eginhard as well as of the rest? What is the atmosphere in which they live? Will it be seriously maintained that as concerns the qualifications for giving truthful testimony, they are on a level with the Apostles and their companions? It is assumed here, despite assertions made to the contrary, that the contents of the Gospels present with substantial correctness the testimony of the immediate Disciples of Jesus. Had they no advantage in respect to that sobriety of mind which enables one to perceive the truth and to state what he knows, above the persons who figure in Eginhard's account? To objections quite similar to those which Professor Huxley brings forward, Bishop Butler, in his grave, truth-loving manner, thus replies: —

"Over against all these objections is to be set the importance of Christianity, as what must have engaged the attention of its first converts, so as to have rendered them less liable to be deceived from carelessness than they would in common matters; and likewise the strong

obligations to veracity which their religion laid them under; so that the first and most obvious presumption is that they could not be deceived themselves, nor would deceive others. And this presumption, in this degree, is peculiar to the testimony we have been considering."

In the case of the Apostles was there no ethical training, no restraint upon tendencies to indulge in fancies at variance with reality, in a daily association with Jesus Christ? It is possible here to set down only in the briefest manner some of the differences in the situation of the first Disciples as compared with the framers of mediæval legends. The miracles of Jesus had an essential part in *originating* the Disciples' faith in him. They served to neutralize the disappointment which his refusal to take the *rôle* of a political Messiah, and his sufferings and death, occasioned. The alleged ecclesiastical miracles were in accord with a faith already established and assured beyond the intrusion of doubt. This is a difference of vital moment. The testimony of the Apostles was given in the face of incredulous Sadducees. The witnesses were ridiculed and maltreated on account of it. They were to be, and they were, brought before magistrates to answer to the charge of heresy. There was no room and there was no time, as any one who looks at the circumstances of the first Disciples ought to see, for devout dreams and the invention of romances in conformity with an ideal of their own devising. If the Disciples were "characterized by a prolific" fancy and an unchastened credulity such as were

active in giving birth to the legends of the saints, why were no miracles ascribed to John the Baptist? Why did they not ascribe miracles to Jesus during the first thirty years of his life? These are among the questions which admit of but one fair answer. They had the conscientious feeling which belongs to witnesses who have a sacred obligation to fulfil.

There are two pre-requisites for a just appreciation of the Gospel histories. The one is something like an adequate consciousness of those profound needs of the soul to which the salvation of Christ ministers. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The other is something like an adequate perception of the "overwhelming greatness" of Christ.

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